The UN *at* 50

Statements by world leaders

New York, 22–24 October 1995

United Nations

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Compendium of statements
delivered at the
Special Commemorative Meeting
of the General Assembly
on the occasion of the
fiftieth anniversary of the
United Nations

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Preface

THE *Special Commemorative Meeting of the General Assembly to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations brought together 177 high-level representatives of Member States, including 128 heads of State and Government, and 23 heads or representatives of observer States and organizations. This was a unique occasion. In deeply serious and far-reaching statements, world leaders presented their views on the United Nations and its role in the future.*

These speeches expressed faith in the United Nations and reaffirmed its purposes and principles. All speakers expressed a determination to provide the twenty-first century with an effective United Nations, capable of fulfilling the promise of the Charter.

This compendium of speeches and the Declaration adopted by the Special Commemorative Meeting rededicate the United Nations to the world, and reaffirm the commitment of the world to the United Nations.

Boutros Boutros-Ghali

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Introduction

PURSUANT to its resolution 48/215 B of 26 May 1994, the United Nations General Assembly convened a Special Commemorative Meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations at Headquarters from 22 to 24 October 1995. The list of speakers for the Special Commemorative Meeting was organized in accordance with the procedure set forth in the annex to General Assembly resolution 49/12 B of 24 May 1995 (annex I). In accordance with the aforementioned annex, the first speaker was the head of State of the host country of the Organization. Following the order resulting from the lottery selection process outlined in paragraph 3 of the annex, priority then was accorded to heads of State, followed by vice-presidents, crown princes/princesses, heads of Government, the highest ranking official of the Holy See and Switzerland, as observer States, and Palestine, in its capacity as observer, ministers, permanent representatives and other observers.

This compendium presents all the statements addressed to the General Assembly, as published in the relevant verbatim records, and in the order in which they were delivered at the Special Commemorative Meeting. It should be noted that, by decision of the General Assembly, statements were limited to five minutes. For ease of reference, an alphabetical listing of all the speakers in the Special Commemorative Meeting is provided in annex II.

At the conclusion of the statements, the General Assembly adopted by acclamation the Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations.

I. Opening statements

A. Statement

By the President of the General Assembly,
H.E. Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral

I have the honour this morning to open the Special Commemorative Meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 48/215 B of 26 May 1994 and 49/12 B of 24 May 1995.

Distinguished Heads of State, Heads of Government and other High Dignitaries of State, Excellencies:

It is my privilege to thank each one of you for coming from all parts of the world to the Headquarters of the United Nations in order to participate in the Special Commemorative Meeting of its fiftieth anniversary and, by doing so, to give public testimony of your praise for the achievements of the last 50 years and of your strong commitment to preserve and reform this commendable Organization.

This is your home, and the future of the United Nations will be what you, Excellencies, decide it to be. The destiny of the United Nations is in your hands.

But what is to be done? Is this an Organization worth preserving in view of its past? And what shall we do with it in view of its future?

[*Continued in French*]

During the first 50 years of its history, the United Nations has not been able to achieve all of its ideals but it has not been the sterile, ineffective, not-to-say harmful, instrument which its detractors accuse it of being. We humbly acknowledge the mistakes, omissions and faults, but let us not forget the successes, the victories, the good that has been done for the benefit of all mankind.

Should we regret having founded a universal Organization to attempt to maintain peace among nations and to affirm the primacy of law and justice? Do we consider it a mistake to have adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to ensure that these rights are respected by all and to contribute to the democratization of an increasing number of countries?

Do we deny the principle of self-determination of peoples, decolonization, the end of apartheid?

Do we not recognize that development aid to the poorest countries on the planet is essential?

Do we admit to being wrong when we set the most recent priority to protect nature and the environment?

[*Continued in Spanish*]

Excellencies, no. We have not been wrong — neither in 1945 nor during the last 50 years. Our principles, our values, our ideals were then and are now politically valid, morally worthy and humanely just. We should be proud of them.

Does this mean that everything is perfect at the United Nations? Obviously not.

But let us not be misled by criticism. There is, of course, reason to rectify many things, but it would be a serious mistake for mankind to allow the United Nations to die.

If the goals and purposes of the United Nations are positive and welcome, and if the Organization has been and continues to be able to realize them even though with limitations and shortcomings, we should not be ashamed of our support to the United Nations. We must simply reform it.

[*Continued in English*]

Supporting the United Nations — that should be our collective pledge in this Special Commemorative Meeting. Reforming the United Nations — that should be our political commitment during these three days.

We must not allow this Organization to die at the hands of its critics, nor to perish for lack of commitment of its supporters. Therefore I ask you: Please tell the world that freedom, justice, development and human solidarity are magnificent values worth living and working for. Please tell your peoples that we must all help each other for the survival and benefit of humanity. Please tell your Governments and Parliaments that, with the necessary reforms and changes, the United Nations needs money to function, support from Member countries to function well, and wisdom and generosity from us all to save and help those human beings most in need.

Excellencies, at the very beginning of these unique and historic meetings, may I share with you these three wishes:

Let us praise the United Nations and its "founding fathers".

Let us fight the destructive critics of the Organization and not allow them to be the United Nations "liquidating fathers".

Let us take upon ourselves the noble and necessary task of becoming, from today, the "reforming fathers" of the United Nations.

If we do so, we will deserve the respect of future generations, especially when they celebrate — surely in this same Hall — the hundredth anniversary of the United Nations.

B. Statement

By the Secretary-General,
H.E. Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali

[*Delivered in Arabic*]

May I welcome you all, Kings, heads of State and Government of the world. Welcome to your home, the home of the world's peoples. Welcome to the forum of the United Nations, the forum of peace, concord and development. Welcome to you all, and heartfelt greetings for your leadership.

[*Continued in English*]

We meet to commemorate 50 years of the United Nations. How can we shape the next 50 years to serve people's needs? The world of the twenty-first century will confront two great opposing forces: globalization and fragmentation. A new dialectic has already begun.

Globalization will generate a number of problems. Financial flows of vast magnitude sweep across the world. Alarming environmental events will expose the planet to permanent damage. Transnational crime will grow. The global communications revolution will generate pressures which our national institutions were not designed to address.

Fragmentation also will characterize the future. The remote and impersonal forces of globalization will cause people to seek security in smaller groups. Fragmentation can breed fanaticism, isolationism, separatism and the proliferation of civil war.

The United Nations can help deal with the dialectic of globalization and fragmentation and help solve the problems it will create. It can do so because the United Nations was designed to be both the world Organization and the Organization of its Member States — designed, therefore, to respond both to global concerns and to the needs of Member States and their peoples. As if in training for precisely this moment, the United Nations in 50 years has gained experience in dealing with both globalization and fragmentation.

In response to globalization, the United Nations defined human rights for the global community. It fostered the progress of international law. It transformed the law of the sea. Through a continuum of global conferences it is promoting international consensus on new global issues of disarmament, environment, population, social development and migration.

In response to fragmentation, the United Nations has been called upon to respond to civil wars: Katanga, Cambodia, El Salvador, Angola and Mozambique. To prevent fragmentation, the United Nations is promoting democratization both within and among States. Within States, issues of identity and ethnic separatism will be decided by the ballot box, not by the gun. Among States, democratization will promote the full participation of all States in world affairs.

But the United Nations cannot play this role if the present trend continues. The United Nations is trapped by a second dialectic. The problems of globalization and fragmentation have caused vast responsibilities to be given to the United Nations, but the United Nations has not been given the resources required to accomplish the tasks imposed.

The financial crisis is a symptom of a deeper problem: Member States simply do not regard the United Nations as a priority. This is sad news to report to this Meeting. I appeal to you to give the United Nations a firm financial base. If steps towards this cannot be set in motion by the end of this year, I urge you to give serious consideration to calling a special session of the General Assembly to deal with the financial crisis of the Organization.

This historic Meeting is a time for you, the leaders of the world, to consider what you want from the United Nations. I respectfully ask you to do this.

II. Statements delivered on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations

A. Statements delivered at the 35th plenary meeting held on 22 October 1995

1. The United States of America

Address by
H.E. Mr. William J. Clinton, President

This week the United Nations is 50 years old. The dreams of its founders have not been fully realized. But its promise endures.

The value of the United Nations can be seen the world over: in the nourished bodies of once-starving children; in the full lives of those immunized against disease; in the eyes of students eager to learn; in the environment sustained; in the refugees saved; in the peace kept; and, most recently, in standing up for the human rights and human possibilities of women and their children, at the Beijing Conference.

The United Nations is the product of faith and knowledge: faith that different peoples can work together for tolerance, decency and peace; knowledge that this faith will be forever tested by the forces of intolerance, depravity and aggression. Now we must summon that faith — and act on that knowledge — to meet the challenges of a new era.

In the United States, some people ask: Why should we bother with the United Nations? America is strong. We can go it alone. Well we will act if we have to, alone. But my fellow Americans should not forget that our values and our interests are also served by working with the United Nations. The United Nations helps the peacemakers, the care-providers, the defenders of freedom and human rights, the architects of economic prosperity and the protectors of our planet to spread the risk, share the burden and increase the impact of our common efforts.

Last year I pledged that the United States would continue to contribute substantially to the finances of the United Nations. Historically the United States has been — and today it remains — the largest contributor to the United Nations. But I am determined that we must fully meet our obligations and I am working with our Congress on a plan to do so. All who contribute to the work of the United Nations and care about its future must also be committed to reform, to ending bureaucratic inefficiencies and outdated priorities. The United Nations must be able to show that the money it receives supports saving and enriching peoples' lives — not unneeded overhead.

Reform requires breaking up bureaucratic fiefdoms; eliminating obsolete agencies; and doing more with less. The United Nations must reform to remain relevant, and to play a still stronger role in the march of freedom, peace and prosperity. We see it around the world. In the Middle East and

Northern Ireland, people are turning from a violent past to a future of peace. In South Africa and Haiti, long nights of fear have given way to new days of freedom. Throughout this hemisphere every nation — except one — has chosen democracy. And the goal of an integrated, peaceful and democratic Europe is now within our reach for the first time.

In the Balkans, the international community's determination and the resolve of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have made prospects for peace brighter than they have been for four long years. Let me salute the efforts of the United Nations on behalf of the people of Bosnia. The nations that took part in the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) kept the toll of this terrible war — in lives lost; wounds left unhealed; children left unfed — from being far graver still. Next week, the parties to the war in Bosnia will meet in Dayton, Ohio, under the auspices of the United States and our Contact Group partners — Russia, the United Kingdom, France and Germany — to intensify the search for peace. Many fundamental differences remain. But I urge the parties to seize this chance for a settlement. If they achieve peace the United States will be there with our friends and allies to help secure it.

All over the world people yearn to live in peace and that dream is becoming a reality.

But our time is not free of peril. As the cold war gives way to the global village, too many people remain vulnerable to poverty, disease and underdevelopment. All of us are exposed to ethnic and religious hatred, the reckless aggression of rogue States, terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The emergence of the information-and-technology age has brought us all closer together and given us extraordinary opportunities to build a better future. But in our global village progress can spread quickly, but trouble can too. Trouble at the far end of town soon becomes a plague on everyone's house. We cannot free our own neighbourhoods from drug-related crime without the help of countries where the drugs are produced. We cannot track down terrorists without assistance from other Governments. We cannot prosper or preserve our environment unless sustainable development is a reality for all nations. And our vigilance alone cannot keep nuclear weapons stored half a world away from falling into the wrong hands.

Nowhere is cooperation more vital than in fighting the increasingly interconnected groups that traffic in terror, organized crime, drug smuggling and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. No one is immune: not the people of Japan, where terrorists unleashed nerve gas in the subway and poisoned thousands; not the people of Latin America or South-East Asia, where drug traffickers wielding imported weapons have murdered judges, journalists, police officers and innocent passers-by; not the people of Israel and France, where hatemongers have blown up buses and trains full of children with suitcase bombs made from smuggled explosives; not the people of the former Soviet Union and Central Europe, where organized criminals seek to weaken new democracies and prey on decent, hard-working men and women; and not the people of the United States, where home-grown terrorists blew up a federal building in the heart of America, and where foreign terrorists tried to topple the World Trade Center and plotted to destroy the very Hall we gather in today.

These forces jeopardize the global trend towards peace and freedom, undermine fragile new democracies, sap the strength from developing countries and threaten our efforts to build a safer, more prosperous world. So today I call upon all nations to join us in the fight against them. Our common efforts can produce results. To reduce the threat of weapons of mass destruction, we are working with Russia to reduce our nuclear arsenals by two thirds. We supported Ukraine, Kazakstan and Belarus in removing nuclear weapons from their soil. We work with the States of the former Soviet Union to safeguard nuclear materials and to convert them to peaceful use. North Korea has agreed to freeze its nuclear programme under international monitoring. Many of the nations in this Hall succeeded in getting the indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

To stem the flow of narcotics and stop the spread of organized crime, we are cooperating with many nations, sharing information, providing military support and initiating anti-corruption efforts. Results are coming. With Colombian authorities we have cracked down on the cartels that control the world's cocaine market. Two years ago they lived as billionaires beyond the law; now many are living as prisoners behind bars.

To take on terrorists we maintain strong sanctions against States that sponsor terrorism and defy the rule of law, States such as Iran, Iraq, Libya and Sudan. We ask them today again to turn from that path. Meanwhile we increase our own law enforcement efforts and our cooperation with other nations.

Nothing we do will make us invulnerable. But we can all become less vulnerable if we work together. That is why today I am announcing new initiatives to fight international organized crime, drug trafficking, terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction — initiatives we can take on our own and others we hope we will take together — in the form of an international declaration to promote the safety of the world's citizens.

First, the steps we will take: Yesterday I directed our Government to identify and put on notice nations that tolerate money-laundering. Criminal enterprises are moving vast sums of ill-gotten gains through the international financial system with absolute impunity. We must not allow them to wash the blood off profits from the sale of drugs, from terror or organized crime. Nations should bring their banks and financial systems into conformity with international anti-money-laundering standards. We will work to help them do so. If they refuse we will consider appropriate sanctions. Next I directed our Government to identity the front companies and to freeze the assets of the largest drug ring in the world, the Cali Cartel, to cut off its economic lifelines and stop our own people from dealing unknowingly with its companies. Finally, I have instructed the Justice Department to prepare legislation to provide our other agencies with the tools they need to respond to organized criminal activity.

But because we must win this battle together, I now invite every country to join in negotiating and endorsing a declaration on international crime and citizen safety.

That declaration should include, first, a no-sanctuary pledge so that we could say together to organized criminals, terrorists, drug traffickers and smugglers, "You have nowhere to run and nowhere to hide".

It should include, secondly, a counter-terrorism pact so that together we would urge more States to ratify existing anti-terrorism treaties and work with us to shut down the grey markets that outfit terrorists and criminals with firearms and false documents.

Thirdly, there should be an anti-narcotics offensive. The international drug trade poisons people, breeds violence and tears at the moral fabric of our societies. We must intensify action against the drug cartels and the destruction of drug crops, and we in consumer nations such as the United States must decrease demand for drugs.

Fourthly, we should have an effective police-force partnership. International criminal organizations target nations whose law-enforcement agencies lack the experience and capacity to stop them. To help police in the new democracies of Central Europe, Hungary and the United States established an International Law Enforcement Academy in Budapest. Now we should consider a network of centres around the world to share the latest crime-fighting techniques and technology.

Fifthly, we need an illegal-arms and deadly-materials control effort that we all participate in. A package the size of a child's lunch bag held the poison gas used to terrorize Tokyo. A lump of plutonium no bigger than a soda can is enough to make an atomic bomb.

Building on efforts already under way with the States of the former Soviet Union and with our G-7 partners, we will seek to better account for, store and safeguard materials with massive destructive power. We should strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention, adopt a comprehensive test-ban treaty next year and ultimately eliminate the deadly scourge of land-mines. We must press other countries, and our own Congress, to ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention and to intensify our efforts to combat the global illegal arms network that fuels terrorism, equips drug cartels and prolongs deadly conflicts.

This is a full and challenging agenda, but we must complete it, and we must do so together.

Fifty years ago, as the conference that gave birth to the United Nations got under way in San Francisco, a young American war hero recorded his impressions of that event for a newspaper:

> "The average G.I. in the street doesn't seem to have a very clear-cut conception of what this meeting is about",

wrote the young John F. Kennedy.

> "But one bemedalled marine sergeant gave the general reaction when he said: 'I don't know much about what's going on, but if they just fix it so that we don't have to fight any more, they can count me in.'"

The United Nations has not ended war, but it has made it less likely and helped many nations turn from war to peace. The United Nations has not stopped human suffering, but it has healed the wounds and lengthened the lives of millions of human beings. The United Nations has not banished repression or poverty from the Earth, but it has advanced the cause of freedom and prosperity on every continent. The United Nations has not been all that we wished it would be, but it has been a force for good and a bulwark against evil. So at the dawn of a new century so full of promise yet plagued by peril, we still need the United Nations. And so, for another 50 years and beyond, you can count the United States in.

2. Ukraine

Address by
H.E. Mr. Leonid D. Kuchma, President

[*Delivered in Ukrainian; English text provided by the delegation*]

Speaking from this loftiest rostrum on the planet, I feel pride, gratitude and hope. My pride is for the wisdom and far-sightedness of the founders of the United Nations, who actually laid the foundation of a new world order. Challenging history itself, they attempted to establish peaceableness and mutual assistance as forces to oppose hostility and intolerance, and for the first time this was done successfully. Thus, the peoples of the Earth received a unique instrument for consolidating mankind as a single universal organism in its efforts to survive and build a better world.

I am doubly proud of all that because representatives of my people were among the founders of the United Nations. The United Nations might have been the only universal forum in which Ukraine could proclaim its existence as a country. The support of the United Nations promoted the realization of our age-old aspiration to have a State of our own.

Finally, I place great hopes in the future of the United Nations, which brings us closer to the moment when we shall be able to say, "The United Nations means a united world."

With the era of great ideological confrontation behind us, mankind has managed to decrease the threat of self-destruction by nuclear conflagration and to establish sufficiently reliable mechanisms of international security.

I am pleased to point out that Ukraine has made a special contribution to the cause of disarmament. Ours, the third largest nuclear State, was the first in the world voluntarily to renounce nuclear status and nuclear weapons. However, this has entailed enormous economic and ecological losses for us.

I am certain that the establishment of a special status, with international security guarantees, consolidated financial and technical assistance and moral incentives, for countries that renounce nuclear weapons would provide a tremendous impetus for expediting the process of nuclear disarmament. This could be implemented through a new United Nations programme for a twenty-first-century world without nuclear weapons.

United Nations peace-keeping activities require constant improvement and increased efficiency. First and foremost, this would entail reorientation of conflicts towards preventive diplomacy. This would also be promoted by establishing United Nations trusteeship over new States in the process of formation, in order to make the use of force inadmissible and ensure adherence to established norms of international law.

At the same time, the international community should adapt its attitude to separatism — which is frequently the initial cause of local conflicts and which could become the severest challenge to the world of the twenty-first century — to present-day realities.

The disappearance of a world divided into antagonistic systems is related to profound internal transformations in post-socialist countries. I am convinced of the need to establish the most favourable regime possible for those countries' integration into the international community. The establishment of a new United Nations council for economic security — on a level with the Security Council, equal to it in weight and influence — would promote the drafting of specific proposals for international support for those countries' development. Such a body could be used to identify strategic prospects for mankind's development and for preventive efforts in the decades ahead.

The United Nations was established by people who realized that nations, peoples and States are interdependent and complementary components of a single entity called humanity. The presence of an unprecedented number of world leaders here today is convincing evidence of their support for the United Nations at this crucial stage of its development. The most important task for the United Nations today is to define itself under these new conditions and to follow the road indicated by the real circumstances of our existence. To do this would constitute a source of strength, longevity and moral health for the United Nations.

3. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Address by
His Majesty King Hussein Ibn Talal,
King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

[Delivered in Arabic]

It is with pleasure that I greet you all, and express my great pride to be among you today, to represent my country, Jordan, as we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of the United Nations Organization. As I extend my sincere congratulations to you, I recall with esteem and reverence the founders who worked with diligence and sincerity to ingrain the principles of international legality to enhance the role of this Organization, and to safeguard its noble message.

I may not be the eldest head of State among you, but God has willed that I should be the longest serving, and the one who has dealt with the United Nations for the longest period. This has allowed me to follow its development over decades. I recall at an early age, witnessing the endeavours of men like Trygve Lie, Count Bernadotte, Ralph Bunche, Ambassador Pierre Spinelli, the outstanding man, Dag Hammarskjöld, as well as Gunnar Jarring and many others who have served the cause of peace and stability in our region.

As we acknowledge our debt to the men and women of the United Nations who have worked over the years to preserve peace in our region, we Jordanians feel proud to have contributed to serve the same lofty ideals in other parts of the world. The number of Jordanians who participated in United Nations peace-keeping missions over the past years has reached almost 15,000 servicemen. Jordan, in point of fact, ranked fifth among the countries of the world in terms of troop contributions to those noble missions.

My country has suffered enormously from successive wars in the Middle East region which resulted in the tragedy of the Palestinian people. We absorbed the human consequences of their plight in an honourable, unparalleled way in the region. Jordan became the sanctuary and the homeland of all, regardless of their origins. When the cold war ended and we had the opportunity to end the Middle East conflict, we were fully aware that the comprehensive peace which we sought called for wisdom and courage on the part of all leaders. It required confidence in the rule of international legality to settle the differences amongst peoples. We have taken this path with confidence, and we have achieved a great deal.

Today we celebrate the first anniversary of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, which we hope will be a principal underpinning of the process of comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region; that peace which will enable all the region's peoples to resume their quest for development and to build a better life for future generations.

Over the past year, we have been able to address comprehensively all the terms of the treaty governing future relations between Jordan and Israel. I am glad to announce from this platform that young pilots from the Royal Jordanian Air Force and the Israeli Air Force flew the skies of their two countries today in joint formations to honour their comrades who have fallen, to salute their peoples and to embody peace and the commitment to safeguard it.

Peace, poverty, and underdevelopment cannot co-exist in the same region. Hence, the Amman economic summit, which, in a few days, will herald a new drive for the comprehensive development of the region and underscore the concept of cooperation amongst the peoples of the region with a view to improving their standards of living, and in consolidating peace and regional cooperation amongst them.

Permit me, on this occasion, to thank this Organization for announcing last Friday the establishment of the United Nations University International Leadership Academy in Jordan. This academy will be the first of its kind for the promising leaderships in the world and the first branch of the United Nations University in the Middle East.

Fifty years have passed since the United Nations was founded. During this time, some of its Member States have undergone fundamental changes. This is a good moment to review the structure and systems of the international organizations and institutions. Of prime importance is a review of the Security Council and the nature of membership in it so that the Organization may reflect today's world. This is essential for the United Nations to rejuvenate itself and meet its new challenges.

Many regions of the world today continue to suffer from tensions and conflicts. Others dwell in the shadow of war and the resultant poverty, backwardness and abuses of human rights. It is high time that the international community moved to alleviate their suffering and help them to overcome their difficulties and their plight. In this respect, Jordan will continue to strive, propelled by its faith and convictions, to be a living example of harmonious pluralism in democracy, freedom and respect for human rights. Once again, I greet you all and I wish this Organization every success and progress. God bless you all.

4. The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Address by
H.E. The Honourable Mrs. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga,
President

Your Excellency, permit me to express my good wishes on your election as President. I am deeply honoured to represent the people of Sri Lanka on this historic occasion.

Sri Lanka has always reposed great hopes in the United Nations for effective collective action to achieve our central aim of socio-economic development and thereby ensure social stability and peace for our people.

The transition from the cold-war era to a new world order has shifted the arena of conflict from the international to the national. Whatever the overlay of such conflicts, whether they take on religious, racial or other forms, they stem from poverty and social inequality. We believe, therefore, that the foundations of peace must be built on economic and social stability.

The new agenda of the United Nations, with its heavy emphasis on peace-keeping operations, has impacted adversely on the development process.

As a developing country, Sri Lanka attaches great importance to the role that the United Nations can and must perform in advancing the development process. Unless the principles of the Declaration on the Right to Development, adopted in 1986, are applied positively, with the full commitment of both developed and developing countries, the development process will not be sufficiently advanced.

We believe that effective strengthening of the United Nations system is an essential requisite for advancing its goals. The Organization has, regrettably, sometimes come to be seen by the more vulnerable States as primarily serving the interests of the more powerful States. We welcome the timely initiative of the President of the General Assembly at last year's session to strengthen and empower the United Nations system.

Effective empowerment, in our view, requires: first, that development priorities should not be sacrificed in the pursuit of politico-military operations, which must be set at realistic — even modest — levels; secondly, that decision-making by the United Nations in all areas must be based on the full engagement of all Members, and the Security Council in particular must become more representative of and more responsive to the general membership of the United Nations; thirdly, that commitments made for multilateral action in all fields must be honoured and diligently pursued. In short, the revitalizing process must enhance the capacity of the United Nations, rather than merely effect economies and scale down its scope.

In the index of human development Sri Lanka rates high among developing countries, but we have been traumatized by ethnic tensions kept unnaturally high by the forces of terrorism and chauvinism. None the less, my Government is resolved to fulfil its mandate by seeking, through political negotiations, solutions to our problems that would enable our people to live in peace, security and freedom.

There are, however, obstacles in our way. An armed group which claims to represent an ethnic minority has been engaged in violent acts against successive popularly elected Governments, preventing them from ensuring peace and justice for all in our land. This group, which also operates on foreign soil, maintains an international network for fund-raising based on coercion and blackmail. That network has a close nexus with powerful commercial interests engaged in narcotic trafficking, trade in illicit arms and smuggling of illegal immigrants. Concerted international action is essential to combat terrorism and to compel the terrorists to renounce violence and enter the democratic process. Unfortunately, effective action to that end has been frustrated through sterile philosophical debate about the nature of terrorism.

However, in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) we have overcome that difficulty by focusing our attention on manifestations of terrorism. The SAARC Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism provides for a collective response. This centres on a comprehensive legal regime and practical measures to combat terrorism.

I urge similar action by the United Nations to give legal effect to the obligations arising from the Declaration on the Elimination of Terrorism, adopted last year. I was happy to hear President Clinton's statement in this regard. I hope that our common realization of the terrible consequences of terrorism, drug trafficking and other such antisocial activities will usher in a new era of international cooperation to combat these problems.

My Government is committed to providing full opportunities in Sri Lanka for the development of the total human person. While promoting rapid economic growth, we seek to distribute its benefits equitably. This involves the maintenance of democratic institutions and the preservation of human rights. It makes of politics the discharge of a public trust, where decision-making is transparent and free of corruption and everyone in public life is accountable for their actions.

In the end, the United Nations will essentially be what we the Member States make of it — not what individual States seek to make from it.

On behalf of the Government and people of Sri Lanka, I take this opportunity to wish the United Nations success in its endeavours to transform the separate dreams of all the nations into a multifaceted, yet harmonious, reality.

5. The Republic of Namibia

Address by
H.E. Dr. Sam Nujoma, President

We are gathered here on this historic occasion to praise the United Nations for its outstanding achievements and, at the same time, to pay a well-deserved tribute to its founders.

Celebration of the birth, longevity and performance of the United Nations is proper and fitting indeed. The world has been a safer place because of the United Nations, and its continued relevance is beyond question. Yet our thoughts focus beyond the celebration, on the future.

During the past 50 years, this Organization has served humanity as a universal market-place of great ideas and collective action. From its founding, the United Nations has had its critics — among them, some prophets of doom. But the truth is that after 50 years the Organization is alive and well. Its misfortunes are exaggerated. Failures are those of the Member States, and not of the United Nations.

The 50 years of the existence of the United Nations have brought the peoples of the world closer together than ever before. Indeed, today's world is truly a global village. During this period we have also witnessed tremendous breakthroughs in the fields of science and technology and information, as well as in respect for the worth of the human person and in consciousness of the environment.

We are now more than ever aware that this is our one world, belonging to all of us, rich and poor, developed and developing, big and small. Let us, therefore, together commit ourselves to keeping our planet, oceans and space safe and to developing the common heritage of humankind which they offer on a sustainable basis for all.

We in Namibia waged one of the last major battles in Africa against colonial tyranny and brutality. Decolonization is the most monumental accomplishment of the United Nations and humankind. Namibia stands out as a brilliant example of the decisive role played by the United Nations in this field.

The United Nations, it can be said, has used the Namibian experience to develop international norms of peace-keeping and modalities for political transformation. Let me, however, point out that the key to this success was the readiness of the Namibians themselves to cooperate with the United Nations Transition Assistance Group. This is a success story our Organization should be proud of.

In Namibia, we have fully incorporated democratic ideals, fundamental human rights, basic freedoms and the protection of the environment into our Constitution. We are now striving to imprint the ideals of the Constitution on the minds and hearts of our people. Happily, today, the rights of women, children, migrant workers and indeed all human beings are respected and defended worldwide in the constitutions and laws of many nations.

As we start the second jubilee of the United Nations, we must abandon past misconceptions as well as the way we conduct inter-State relations. Cold-war legacies must be replaced by cooperation in the emerging world order. A restructuring of the Security Council, which is long overdue, should be carried out in a manner that upholds the principles of democracy, the sovereign equality of States, equitable geographical representation and transparency. Only then can the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Council be enhanced. There is no shortage of workable ideas to bring about the necessary reform that will accommodate the vital interests of Africa, Asia and Latin America as permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council. Needless to say, the authority and importance of the General Assembly should not be compromised in the reform exercise.

Granted, the United Nations is far from perfect, but for us, it is the only truly viable forum in which developing and small nations like Namibia can raise their voices on the basis of equality. This Assembly stands at the centre of multilateral diplomacy and cooperation as originally envisioned by the Charter of the United Nations. Rededication, therefore, must start here.

During the next 50 years and beyond, the United Nations should stress interdependence, equity and fair play among nations and peoples in order to remove the ever-widening gap between the rich North and the poor South. The future belongs to the youth and children. Our collective duty must be to reinforce their vision for a peaceful, harmonious and prosperous future in the spirit of brotherhood and cooperation.

6. The Republic of Zambia

Address by
H.E. Mr. Frederick J. T. Chiluba, President

Let me happily congratulate you, Sir, and pay tribute to you on your deserved election to the high office of President of the General Assembly at its fiftieth session. We are sure of the successful proceedings of the session under your able leadership.

I wish to reaffirm Zambia's abiding faith in the United Nations. I further wish to reiterate my country and Government's commitment to the articles of faith of the United Nations, to which we fully subscribe.

In a world of growing tensions and challenges, the United Nations has performed well since its inception in 1945 and deserves a word of appreciation and thanks. Some of its officers and personnel have made supreme sacrifices in the execution of their selfless tasks. Among them was the second Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, who died in a plane crash on 17 September 1961 on Zambia's soil. We must always remember all of them for their valour.

Zambia is fully convinced that the United Nations can and must do even better. Its efficiency must be augmented and fortified. Zambia therefore joins those countries which have called for a restructuring of the United Nations to enable it to cope with increased demands and challenges.

The United Nations today faces a crisis of confidence and expectations. The structures of 1945, designed and meant to service an almost homogeneous membership of 50 countries that has since increased almost fourfold, are no longer capable of serving and servicing the bigger and wider globe. Membership has increased in numbers as well as in regional diversity, which calls for equitable, broader representation. In the spirit of genuine representative democracy and good governance which the United Nations embodies and personifies, in the spirit of the equality of nations and in the search for genuine peace and security, the United Nations has to reform to embrace broader geographical representation.

The Security Council especially, we believe, can no longer be maintained as a sanctuary of the holy of holies, with only the original members acting as high priests and deciding on issues for the rest of the world, which cannot be admitted. Broader and geographical representation is the answer.

We believe that a restructured and more representative United Nations will be better equipped to respond to growing demands and challenges which have become multifarious in character.

Zambia also believes that efficiency may be a far cry until and unless all Member States honour their obligations and pay their financial subscriptions to the world body to enable it to meet increased demands and challenges.

7. The Republic of Turkey

Address by
H.E. Mr. Süleyman Demirel, President

It is an honour for me to address this historic meeting, and on this solemn occasion to renew our pledge to the global contract of humanity.

Fifty years ago, the United Nations was created to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in achieving a better world for all. The Charter of the United Nations was to provide the road map to a new international order. However, the initial hopes and aspirations of the founders turned into disillusionment during the dark days of the cold war. Now, there is a widespread revival of the positive spirit that prevailed half a century ago.

Some moments in history stand out as defining ones. At times they can be new beginnings, in which courses are set that shape decades, even centuries. Such should be the fiftieth anniversary. We should seize this moment to adapt the United Nations to the new challenges and demands of our times, and in this we must not fail.

This Organization was established to be a meeting point of men and women who believe in shared dreams. It is intended to be a forum in search of a collective conscience.

Expectations from the United Nations are rising. So are disappointments. We must improve our ability to address problems globally.

No nation can be fully at peace while its neighbour is not. With this awareness, we must base our actions on the interlocking concepts of democratic interdependence, market rationale, economic cooperation, international and constitutional legality, shared prosperity and solidarity. Together we must resolutely resist those who try to undermine our renewed hope and vision, those who openly defy our common values and international law.

Let us have faith in our strength. Let us not forget that to go forward at all is to go forward together. Let us be aware that the peoples of the world are strongly demanding the helping hand of the United Nations. Let us not disappoint them. Let us fashion a new plan of action to create a United Nations which will remain true to the ideals of its founders.

To this end, we must place preventive diplomacy at the top of our agenda; show resolve to thwart aggression in all its forms; renew our commitments to peacemaking and peace enforcement; redouble our efforts for a comprehensive and genuine reform process of the Organization; create a Security

Council which is more representative, responsive, democratic and accountable; revisit the idea of collective security; increase the cooperation between the United Nations and the regional organizations; address the problems arising from United Nations-imposed sanctions and set up a mechanism for the effective implementation of Article 50 of the Charter; find creative ways and means to secure new financial resources; and maintain people-centred development at the core of our agenda for development.

With regard to the last point, I would like to invite all Heads of State and Government to Istanbul in June 1996 to take part in the City Summit, Habitat II Conference, to discuss how sufficient housing, a healthy environment and social services can be provided for the billions of people living in the cities, as well as other human settlements of the world.

The future offers hope. Let us seize the opportunity and be firm in our commitment to our common destiny. Turkey has incurred the second highest loss of human life in peace operations under the United Nations flag. I solemnly reiterate Turkey's determination to continue to shoulder its share of global responsibility.

With these remarks, I would like to quote a great Turkish humanist and poet-philosopher, Yunus Emre who, seven centuries ago, made the following call to all the peoples of the world:

[*Continued in Turkish*]

"Gelin tanis olalim,
Isi kolay kilalim.
Sevelim, sevilelim,
Dünya kimseye kalmaz."

[*Continued in English*]

That means

"Come, let us get to know each other,
and make it easier for all of us.
Let us love and be loved,
For, this world is no one's to own for ever."

This is the message I have brought to this historic meeting from the people of a country standing at the crossroads of continents and cultures and a country that stands dedicated to the noble principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

8. The Republic of San Marino

Address by
H.E. Mr. Pier Natalino Mularoni, Captain Regent

[Delivered in Italian; English text provided by the delegation]

In the space of 50 years, a man and a woman come into the world, grow up, obtain a diploma or learn a trade, get married and have children. Sometimes they live long enough to see and love their grandchildren.

Thus, three new generations have followed the first 50 years of the United Nations. A further one has to be added, then, if one considers the generation which witnessed the establishment of the Organization after having experienced the tragic and painful reality of the World War.

War can be avoided by resorting to peaceful means, to negotiations and through the good will of those holding power or armed force. Despite this message, however, wars are still dramatic recurring events in every part of the world.

Although the arrogant and ambitious desire for supremacy remains the manifest, or concealed, cause of all wars, it is evident that — at least to a certain extent — the determining factors have changed.

No more wars! This is the strong and resolute appeal that the Captains Regent of the Republic of San Marino wish to reiterate to this Assembly. Over the years, this very Hall has witnessed the celebration of many achievements, the real sharing and resolution of peoples' problems, the condemnation of unfair treatment and dictatorships, as well as the admission of many peoples once exploited by colonial regimes and oppressed by intolerant systems. Now, this Assembly is looking forward to the admission of more peoples, whose right to a homeland and to a territory must be finally recognized.

No more wars! This is the appeal of a small country which is also one of the newest United Nations Member States. San Marino regards this condition as a privilege to be proud of, and on this occasion it reaffirms its formal commitment to contribute its own share, to the extent made possible by its territorial dimensions and real possibilities.

The United Nations has also been able to elaborate and to teach a second fundamental concept: a new law of nations and a code of conduct for States.

Thanks to the true nature and to the consequences of this new law of States, the international community has started to reject the idea of a dangerous return to a division into military, economic and political blocs and, at the same time, to a new fragmentation. The contribution of all and the setting of common goals are, in fact, the indispensable foundations for the resolution of today's problems.

The capacity and strength of the United Nations in consolidating a third fundamental concept — a higher recognition of all human rights — must be generally acknowledged. In the achievement of this ambitious goal, the United Nations has been assisted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in its sphere of competence, and by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe, in the European area.

This last concept entails, *inter alia*, respect for the human person and human dignity; the principle of tolerance towards those who, despite all appearances, are equal to us; and respect for life, which is constantly endangered by wars, armaments, nuclear power, the death penalty and hunger. It includes respect for, and the conservation and restoration of, the environment, as an essential and primary component of life; the struggle against poverty, underdevelopment and the exploitation of peoples and of poverty-stricken areas; and, as a consequence, the commitment to social justice and solidarity.

Today, solidarity must take new and more humane forms. It can no longer be expressed through charitable acts determined by exceptional circumstances. On the contrary, solidarity has to be translated into a concerted plan of assistance and be considered a common duty of the entire international community. This assumption leads to the consequent sharing of the problems of all and to participation in their resolution.

Moreover, this concept asserts respect for the fundamental freedoms of all individuals and citizens and the observance of their effective and full enjoyment, as well as the participation of all citizens in the sharing of power, through the democratic rules of representation, transparency, control and alternation.

In particular, the Captains Regent wish to stress the right of all peoples to land and to its natural and inalienable use, and recommend the total elimination of the aberrant practices of slavery, torture and the death penalty. We encourage respect for, and the safeguarding of, the rights of minorities and the possibility for any people or minority to maintain and promote their cultural identity. Finally, the Captains Regent wish to advocate peace, the fundamental basis of which is the peaceful and democratic coexistence of all citizens within States, with full respect for the rights of every human person and of all.

On behalf of the people and the Government of the Republic of San Marino, the Captains Regent, through this universal Assembly, express the wish that the United Nations may continue its work for many, many years, and wish it even greater success in accepting, meeting and resolving the difficult challenges of the third millennium.

It is our sincere hope that here, through the universality of this Organization, the participation of all, and the equal rights and opportunities granted to all Members, the States may formulate with impartiality the policies that will determine the future of each human being, ensuring freedom, health, well-being and equality for all.

9. The Republic of Estonia

Address by
H.E. Mr. Lennart Meri, President

Our fathers, who fought in the First World War and in the wars of freedom from colonialism that followed, which in turn inspired United States President Wilson's Fourteen Points on the rights of self-determination, created the League of Nations.

The League of Nations embodied much idealism and little realism. It was not able to halt the game of division played by Hitler and Stalin, nor was it able to stop the agonized agitation of colonial dinosaurs or to break the chain of anti-colonial wars that followed and cost between 60 million and 100 million human lives.

President Roosevelt hoped to secure stability in the world by a combination of realism and idealism. Idealism reigned in this world parliament, where each State, whether 1 million or 1,000 million strong, was equal to the others. Realism, on the other hand, was the dominant force in the Security Council, in which the Allies of the Second World War exercised the right of veto.

This is how, 50 years ago, the United Nations was called into life.

Let us consider for a moment the numbers. When the United Nations was conceived, there were 50 Member States. Today, there are 185. The Republic of Estonia has followed this development with great attention, for three reasons.

First, the occupation of the independent Republic of Estonia by the Red Army pushed us for 50 years into the ranks of colonized peoples. We are sympathetic to their concerns, because we value the right to self-determination, independence and democracy. At the same time, we are an old democracy. We are a State that was born out of the decomposition of an empire, as were Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and many other States.

This is a unique state of affairs. We belong at the same time to the first and the third worlds. We hold the same values, principles and goals as the first world, and experience the disappointments and concerns of the third world.

Secondly, one result of the end of colonial empires was the birth of new States. Most of those States, called "new democracies", are comparable with Estonia from the standpoint of population and land mass. Today, and in this Hall, this is less a geographic than a political attribute. Small States are, by definition, more easily wounded, which means that in a security vacuum small States are more sensitive to barometric changes than large ones. Besides common ideals, we also have common concerns.

Thirdly, as I have noted, those States that have risen from the end of colonialism and neocolonialism form a majority in our world community. Unfortunately, this is a silent majority. Its voice is weak and ineffectual in this global forum; its voice is not present in the Security Council.

I speak of this here and now because hope springs eternal. For this reason, I have two proposals: first, we should consider the idea of a rotating member in the Security Council chosen from among the world's small States. Secondly, I call upon the small States of the world to gather in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, to draft a declaration: the Tallinn Declaration of Small States.

I make these proposals based on the hope that lies in the silent majority of this world Organization. We, the small nations, are easily wounded; thus we are more sensitive. Because we are more sensitive, we are able to react more quickly. Because we are able to react more quickly, we are consequently more idealistic. Small States are more idealistic, so it follows that a more active hope and a desire to remain true to our principles lives in our midst. It was this hope, it was this dedication to principles upon which, under other circumstances, this Organization was founded 50 years ago.

By next December, you, all the States Members of the United Nations, will receive a draft of the Tallinn Declaration of Small States. This will allow us enough time to consider it and, next September in Tallinn, to gather together in order to work out a mechanism that will turn this silent majority into a constructive majority, whose decisions will help us to fulfil, in a constructive manner, the purposes and principles upon which this Organization is based.

Be well aware of the protocol of this historic meeting. I await your reactions here and now to my proposals, and I look forward to seeing you next September in Tallinn, the capital town of Estonia.

10. The Republic of Korea

Address by
H.E. Mr. Kim Young Sam, President

[Delivered in Korean; interpretation provided by the delegation]

First of all, I would like to pay tribute to the leaders who founded this world body half a century ago and to the courage and the hope for the future they shared after overcoming the despair and frustration born of two world wars. Their dreams of a better world have already changed our planet tremendously, and have affected each one of us. I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt respect for all those who have spearheaded the effort to fulfil the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

The world is undergoing drastic change. Riding the crest of the information age and globalization, not only is the international order undergoing an epochal change, but human civilization itself is being radically transformed.

Change and reform in the United Nations are necessary if the Organization is to create and maintain the new world order. While welcoming a series of discussions which have been held on reform of the United Nations, I would like to express my views on this issue.

First, the United Nations has to be democratized and made more efficient; and every region of the world must be more equitably represented on the Security Council. In particular, I agree with many other Member nations that the number of Council members with veto power — a power that has crippled the United Nations for a long time — should not be raised.

Secondly, the United Nations function of preventing conflict should be strengthened.

Thirdly, the United Nations must respond more actively to demands for economic, social and environmental development. In order to attain true world peace and security, economic and social conflicts in the international community have to be resolved at all costs.

Fourthly, the United Nations has to actively undertake activities that give priority to human beings and families. The ideas of human security and family values put forward at the United Nations World Summit for Development last March will be the most important goal for people around the world in the twenty-first century.

Fifthly, new plans must be established for burden-sharing and for the administration of the additional budget arising from the strengthening of

United Nations functions. I believe that the sooner the United Nations undergoes change and reform, the better it will be for our world. To that end, I hereby propose that a special session of the General Assembly on United Nations reform be held.

The Republic of Korea was established in accordance with a United Nations resolution in 1948. At that time it was one of the poorest countries in the world. Today, it is the eleventh-largest economy in the world and a truly democratic nation. Our success has been a great manifestation of the ideals of the United Nations.

We are now one of the Member nations most active in United Nations activities around the globe. We are already participating in United Nations peace-keeping operations in Western Sahara, the Republic of Georgia, Angola and elsewhere. The Republic of Korea will also actively take part in various United Nations development and environmental projects, and will increase its monetary contributions. In order to help eradicate diseases among children around the world, the Republic of Korea is building an International Vaccine Institute in Korea with help from the United Nations Development Programme.

I am convinced that the Korean peninsula will surely be unified in a democratic way in the not too distant future. I humbly and sincerely ask you all to become solid supporters of the peaceful unification of Korea.

I sincerely hope that this special United Nations summit meeting will be recorded as a bright milestone in world history. We share the cherished desire to turn the twenty-first century into an age of a true global community in which we can coexist and prosper together. Only through our political will and participation in the United Nations can we turn our hopes and dreams into reality.

I hereby respectfully propose that a United Nations summit meeting be held regularly, every five years, and that its first meeting be held in the year 2000.

11. The Republic of Croatia

Address by

H.E. Dr. Franjo Tudjman, President

[*Delivered in Croatian; English text provided by the delegation*]

On the threshold of a new millennium, it is my privilege to address the greatest Summit of world leaders, by which we mark the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations Organization.

So much power has convened today under the roof of the General Assembly Hall, and yet, so little power to provide the necessary solutions leading to a better common future for our peoples and for our entire planet. We are faced with a long and arduous road, but we can look back with pride on the 50 years of our common history.

The disintegration of colonial and ideological empires has given rise to new, modern States, and the number of United Nations Members has increased almost fourfold since the founding of the Organization.

The historical process of democratization could not stop at mere reform of political systems, but, rather, it called for a comprehensive transformation. The totalitarian Iron Curtain that cut across Europe was brought down not only by the determined policy of the Western democratic alliance, but also by the freedom-loving aspirations of nations having small populations and a great historical heritage.

Destiny has allotted to small nations the role of promoters of great ideas. They are the leaders of positive changes in the evolution of humankind that turn the force of a struggle for national survival into a creative vision of tomorrow's world — no longer a world of the large and small, the powerful and weak, but only a world of equal nations and States committed to coexistence.

The boundaries of our freedoms are set by boundaries of the freedom of others. The affirmation of human dignity and the universal rights of the individual upheld by the Charter of the United Nations can be achieved only through respect for different ethnic, religious, cultural and political identities, through an efficient system of collective security, and through respect for a law-governed State and international law. We have to turn negative energy into positive momentum. Reform of global relations and mechanisms must provide for greater respect for civilizational differences, for their creative blending and dialogue on an equal footing. A multipolar world is more stable than a bipolar world and it is the future of humankind.

The global order can no longer be based solely on the special position of the anti-fascist coalition or the nuclear club, or on economic or military power; rather, first and foremost, it should be based on the real contribution of individual countries to the prevention of every form of totalitarianism and to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; on their role within global socio-economic development; on their democratic achievement; and on their regional importance. Thus, for example, we must take into account the present democratic and economic resources of Germany and Japan — countries deserving a permanent seat on the Security Council on the basis of all criteria.

The United Nations must also be a garden of ideas related to general human values, international solidarity and an equitable international order. Our responsibility for narrowing the gap in economic development and for promoting coordinated development of all parts of our planet is equal to our responsibility for global peace.

As one of five successor States of the former Yugoslavia, Croatia also considers itself a founder of the United Nations, a part of the heritage entered into the Charter 50 years ago. Having followed a long tradition of great humanistic visions — from pan-Slavic, pan-European, non-aligned, ecumenical to universal — the people of Croatia have also incorporated the noble ideals of the Charter into their culture.

The citizens of Croatia appreciate the values of multilateral United Nations mechanisms, through which emancipation of the Croatian State and the establishment of full sovereignty throughout its territory have been internationalized and achieved. On this occasion, Croatia expresses its gratitude to the United Nations, in particular for the enormous humanitarian effort that alleviated the suffering of hundreds of thousands of displaced persons within Croatia and of refugees from neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We are entering into the new round of negotiations with the hope that they will bring about the end of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia and find a formula for a just and lasting peace. To the citizens of Croatia and its democratically elected Government, a just peace means establishing Croatia's full sovereignty throughout its territory within its internationally recognized borders. Croatia sincerely hopes that an agreement will soon be reached on the peaceful reintegration of 4.6 per cent of still-occupied Croatian land. At the same time, we remain prepared to take other necessary steps as well, if timely reintegration of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium is not incorporated into the final plan for the region.

We have shown that we have courage in war, but be assured that we have even more courage for peace.

Excellencies, because of our responsibility for peace, freedom and the well-being of our peoples, we, as leaders, must rise above all our other interests and differences. We, the leaders of the modern world, are faced with a great responsibility: we must be united and rise above our distinct personal, party and national interests, and seek the vision of a new world which will hold a future for every individual, every nation and State, for the universality of spirit and for the tolerance of the different. Let the noble visions of the new millennium rest on peace and prosperity of all nations, on harmony in the global family of sovereign States whose common beacon is the United Nations.

12. The Russian Federation

Address by
H.E. Mr. Boris N. Yeltsin, President

[Delivered in Russian]

Half a century ago an event occurred that paved the way for a new period in the history of mankind. Divided and bleeding, the world understood that its only future was the path of mutual understanding and interaction.

Only the United Nations will be able to realize the perennial dream of a world without wars and violence; of a world where controversial issues are settled through negotiation; of a world worthy of the human being and mankind.

But, while having won a world war, we have not yet managed to win peace. The creative capabilities of the world community were for decades hampered by the cold war. It neither benefited any people nor made any people any happier. The end of the cold war has become our common victory. Democratic Russia has made an unquestionable contribution to its achievement.

Nuclear missiles are no longer targeted at each other. But such threats as terrorism, aggressive nationalism, crime and drug abuse are now aimed at each and every one of us. Along with integration, the rifts of estrangement and distrust among States and peoples are emerging.

There is a dangerous tendency to play down the role of the United Nations, to circumvent its Charter and the collective will of the Security Council.

Today, the world more than ever before needs not only equality and tolerance, but also respect for the identity of each State and an understanding of the peculiarities of its history. Each of them is able and willing to make its contribution to the development of the world community and to find an adequate place therein. We should not allow the revival of the atmosphere of animosity and prejudice against countries and peoples.

Does the United Nations have the ability to achieve these goals? In the opinion of Russia, it does. The United Nations can and should become the main instrument for building new international relations. It has all the necessary powers to do so. To carry out this mission it should be provided with appropriate means, including financial resources. Russia meets, and will continue to meet, its obligations to the United Nations.

Certainly, the United Nations has not been able to achieve success in all areas, but the roots of its failure lie, first and foremost, in ourselves, in the behaviour of States and organizations.

Russia is concerned at the situation in which, as has recently been the case in Bosnia, the Security Council was relegated to the sidelines of events. It represents an obvious and clear-cut violation of the basic principles of the world Organization, laid down by its founders. It is inadmissible for a regional organization to take decisions on the massive use of force, bypassing the Security Council.

Russia has worked hard to bring peace closer in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are ready to support the operation on the implementation of a peace agreement with the participation of multinational forces, including Russian forces, but only under a clear-cut mandate of the United Nations Security Council. Military force should never be used in those cases where diplomacy has not been given enough time to succeed. The effects of that would be tragic.

Recently there has been much discussion about the difficult task of revitalizing the United Nations. A lively debate is under way on the issue of the enlargement of the Security Council. We advocate such a reorganization provided only, of course, that the responsibility of the Security Council is increased and the interests of different regions of the world are taken into account.

The main concern of Russia is to achieve stability in Europe and Asia. We are in favour of establishing a security system based on compromises rather than on pressure. European security is indivisible: there is no alternative to that. It is precisely for this reason that Russia supports the idea of the earliest possible establishment of a new system of all-European security wherein all European States would be represented. And this is precisely the reason why we are against the eastward expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It will put a barrier in the way of the establishment of a unified Europe.

The question is an extremely acute one: either such a system would be established for all of Europe or, as in the past, only for a select few. The strengthening of one bloc today means new confrontation tomorrow. This is not the way to build a just world order. It should be based on different principles.

Russia is in favour of a world order in which priority is given to international law and international cooperation.

Russia is in favour of a world order in which a comprehensive security system is put into effect. Russia is in favour of a world order in which steady advance is ensured towards a world free of weapons of mass destruction, a world in which the reduction of conventional weapons is under way.

We are in favour of a world order in which the role of the United Nations as an instrument for achieving peace, settling conflicts and providing development assistance is increasing.

Russia proposes the holding in 1999 of a third Peace Conference. The first one took place in 1899 at the initiative of our country. The third one may be devoted solely to developing the bases for the settlement of conflicts emerging after the cold war.

It is also necessary to find a solution to long-standing issues, especially issues such as nuclear disarmament, the complete cessation of nuclear-weapon tests and control over conventional weapons.

Today, as 50 years ago, we should unite once again to eliminate the legacy of the cold war and to find worthy answers to the challenges of our times.

The United Nations represents the common will of the States of the world. Let us act in accordance with its norms and principles. And then, peace, justice and international law will prevail on Earth. Russia believes in the United Nations, which was born in the middle of the twentieth century and is making its way firmly into the twenty-first century.

13.
The Republic of Cuba

Address by
H.E. Dr. Fidel Castro Ruz,
President of the Council of State and the Council of Ministers

[*Delivered in Spanish*]

Half a century ago the United Nations was born after the conclusion of a monstrous war, at the peak of which an average of 10 million lives were lost. At present, 20 million men, women and children are dying of hunger and curable diseases every year. In some wealthy nations there is a life expectancy of up to 80 years while in other nations there is an expectancy of hardly 40, so there are billions whose lives are cut off. How long shall we wait for this carnage to end?

The cold war is over but the arms race goes on, and nuclear and military hegemonism perpetuate themselves. How long shall we wait for the complete removal of all weapons of mass extermination, for universal disarmament and for the elimination of the use of force, arrogance and pressure in international relations?

The obsolete veto privilege and the ill-use of the Security Council by the powerful are exalting a new colonialism within the very United Nations.

Latin America and Africa do not have a single permanent member in the Security Council. In Asia, India has a population of almost one billion but it does not enjoy that responsibility.

How long, how long shall we wait for the democratization of the United Nations and for the independence and sovereign equality of States to become a reality? How long before non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and true international cooperation take their rightful places?

Breakthroughs in science and technology are increasing daily in number but their benefits do not reach the majority of mankind and they continue essentially to be at the service of a reckless consumerism which is wasting limited resources and seriously threatening life on Earth. How long shall we have to wait before rationality, equity and justice prevail in the world?

The forests are decreasing, the air is being poisoned, the rivers are being contaminated. Countless species of plants and animals are perishing. The soils are impoverished. Old and new epidemics are expanding, while the population grows and the legions of the dispossessed continue to multiply.

Will the next generations reach the promised land pledged half a century ago? How many hundreds of millions have already died without ever seeing it? How many have fallen victim to oppression, plunder, poverty, hunger and unhealthy living conditions? How many more will still die?

We lay claim to a world without hegemonism, without nuclear weapons, without interventionism. without racism, without national or religious hatred, without outrageous acts against the sovereignty of any country, a world with respect for the independence and self-determination of peoples, a world without universal models that totally disregard the traditions and culture of all the components of mankind.

We lay claim to a world without ruthless blockades that cause the death of men, women and children, young and old, like noiseless atom bombs.

We lay claim to a world of peace, justice and dignity where everyone, without exception, has the right to well-being and to life.

14. Brunei Darussalam

Address by
His Majesty Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah,
Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan

I am delighted to join you in celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. In doing so, I convey the best wishes of my Government and the people of Brunei Darussalam. We greet you in the spirit of peace and international friendship.

We are commemorating a unique historic event. No international organization has endured for five decades. The League of Nations failed after less than three. That the United Nations has survived the long and dangerous years of the cold war is no small achievement. Among its many other achievements is the way it eased the path from colonization to independence for more than 100 countries.

It is fashionable to criticize the United Nations. Some of the criticisms are valid. Bosnia and Rwanda represent failures of will and policy that will haunt all Members for a long time. We should also have more rigorous financial controls over spending, and Members must honour their dues so that the United Nations can have the resources to carry out its mandates.

But let us not forget: it is we ourselves as Members who must take the ultimate responsibility for its failures, because as an Organization of sovereign States the United Nations can do no more than its Members empower it to do.

The shortcomings of some peace-keeping operations should not obscure the honour due those who have sacrificed their lives in many successful peace-keeping and humanitarian operations. We owe much to them.

We must also give credit to the United Nations for the sterling service rendered by its specialized agencies. Health, education, agriculture and the work of other specialized agencies may not have captured the headlines, but they have contributed much to the making of a better world. Many dedicated professionals and volunteers have given valuable, if unpublicized, service.

The international environment today is vastly different from that of 1945. We face new global issues, even while several old ones still remain to be solved. Economics is high on the international agenda. Free markets and open competition have become a basis for economic cooperation. That most countries in the world are now concentrating on economic issues is an advance over a world preoccupied with ideological conflicts.

The United Nations is still the best organization to uphold a world order based on international law and the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity. Interdependence between nations has increased but has not displaced the sovereignty of nations as the basic principle in international relations.

The United Nations gives all Members, large and small, an equal voice. This is important for small States like Brunei Darussalam. The United Nations must change to meet new challenges, but I hope it will continue to give small nations an adequate voice in its deliberations.

It is in this spirit that Brunei Darussalam pledges to work with fellow Members to ensure that the United Nations remains a force for peace and progress.

15. The Eastern Republic of Uruguay

Address by
H.E. Dr. Hugo Batalla, Vice-President

[*Delivered in Spanish*]

As the representative of Uruguay, a nation with a deep-seated democratic tradition and a founding Member of the United Nations, I would not wish to make use of this lofty and universal podium merely to engage in rhetoric celebrating the first half-century of the San Francisco Charter.

It would be pointless for us to come here today to run through the political successes the United Nations has achieved over these 50 years, though successes it has had indeed, on the basis of the universalization of the idea of freedom and democracy, to which it made a decisive contribution. Nor shall we emphasize the aspects relating to the sustainable development of mankind which over the same period not only have remained unresolved but in large areas of the world have become considerably worse.

Uruguay has for many years been actively and increasingly involved in the maintenance of peace, a fundamental task of the United Nations in which major successes have been achieved.

Currently, in terms of our population and the size of our armed forces, we are the world's major contributor of personnel to peace-keeping operations.

Nevertheless, these operations cannot be transformed into the Organization's priority objective; rather, the essential part of the activities of the United Nations must focus on preventing conflicts that affect international peace and security, and to this end its role as a forum for ongoing dialogue where disputes are discussed and resolved by peaceful means needs to be strengthened.

Fundamental as it is, silencing weapons does not put an end to the most serious scourge of mankind, namely the hunger and abject poverty which hundreds of millions of human beings are suffering.

Hunger, poverty and subhuman living conditions have claimed more victims in the world than all wars taken together. They have decimated and continue to decimate entire peoples in various regions. At this very moment, millions of children are dying of hunger, at a time when hundreds of millions of square kilometres of fertile land lie unexploited or underexploited as a result, among other things, of the prevailing economic conditions, inequitable international trading relations and the crushing debt burden.

Freedom and democracy are tender plants and their stability is constantly threatened if nations do not at the same time achieve an appropriate and just economic and social environment. The persistence of acute manifestations of underdevelopment, apart from forcing millions of people to live degrading lives — something which the moral conscience of mankind cannot tolerate — also constitutes a latent and persistent threat to the security of all. The success in silencing the guns in various conflicts and the contribution to the elimination of apartheid and to the tearing down of the solid edifice of colonialism that had lasted almost five centuries are undoubtedly — among others — great achievements of the international community, and the United Nations can justly feel proud of them. But the Organization now needs to rethink itself in order to devote all its resources — human, financial, institutional and technical — to the great undertaking of redressing the unjust economic and social imbalances and the related problems of the environment, in the conviction that this is not only a moral imperative but the ideal way of strengthening peace.

The so-called underdeveloped world is not calling on the international community for hand-outs or privileged positions in trade; all it is asking for is fair, transparent and egalitarian treatment, with terms of trade that are not distorted by political pricing, hidden subsidies and dumping — practices whose persistence in international trade causes real havoc in the economies of a large number of nations.

The demands of the new international situation also make it desirable for the United Nations to establish closer links of cooperation and coordination — especially in the field of human rights — with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, whose membership covers the broadest political, ideological and philosophical spectrum of nations, thus ensuring the pluralism from which democracy draws its strength.

Unless the Organization effectively demonstrates its ability to guarantee the international legal order over and above "international policies" dominated by the most powerful nations, under which economic and trade embargoes are imposed and the principles of non-intervention are violated, the international system will without doubt soon be in its painful and prolonged death throes.

Today, as we commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization we are, for all the foregoing reasons, living through an anxious and uncertain present in which even human values themselves are called in question. It is our responsibility to look ahead and, all of us working together, to build on today's anxiety a brighter tomorrow in which all people, whatever their colour, their gender, their religious creed or the place where they live, will have the right, recognized as theirs by the international community, to a life of dignity with access to all the benefits that civilization affords.

The eyes of the world are on us today; we are being called on to take up this challenge, to which Uruguay pledges its best efforts. Time will tell if we have been able to fulfil this hope which we must awaken in all our fellow human beings.

16. New Zealand

Address by
H.E. The Right Honourable James Brendan Bolger,
Prime Minister

Fifty years ago a vision was bravely stated of a world with equal rights for all, free from poverty and the scourge of war. Today we claim not victory, but progress.

Fifty years on the world is very different. The family of nations is larger and more diverse. Communications technology means that we live in a world without walls. That brings a profound change in the way our global neighbourhood operates. It is changing the dynamics of politics and business. Small countries, as well as large, can play a full part in a true global economy.

While aid is important in meeting immediate needs, true independence and prosperity will only come through genuine free trade, which enables each country to use its resources to the best advantage. The new World Trade Organization has much to do to achieve that goal. The nations of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (APEC) agreed in Bogor last year to free trade by 2010 for the industrial nations of this important Asia-Pacific group, and by 2020 for the developing members. We now need this sort of political courage on a global scale. Global free trade is an idea whose time has come.

Equally, the time has come for a new commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons. This Assembly, in its very first session, grappled with the nuclear problem and asked for proposals for the elimination of atomic weapons. New Zealand believed then, as now, that nuclear weapons should be eliminated. Some progress has already been achieved. Several States have abandoned their nuclear capability and some nuclear-weapon States are making significant reductions to their nuclear arsenals — an action which New Zealand applauds.

Against this background New Zealand finds it inexplicable and unacceptable that China and France are still testing nuclear weapons. Continued nuclear explosions send all the wrong signals. What we need is a strategy to achieve the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons. It is not an impossible goal. All member nations which are parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty are already committed to a world without nuclear weapons. It is only a question of how we achieve it.

The welcome announcement that the United States, Britain and France will support the South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone Treaty is a positive step forward. Next year we must complete the comprehensive test-ban treaty. Then we must ban the production of uranium and plutonium for nuclear weapons. And there must be further substantial reductions in the nuclear arsenals of all five nuclear Powers. Then the hope of the first session of this Assembly, of a future without nuclear weapons, will be within our grasp.

In arguing for a world without nuclear weapons, I wish to state with equal firmness that global security cannot be separated from global prosperity and human rights. Economic development and good governance will help to eliminate those sources of tension which tempt States to invest in arms, the infrastructure of death, rather than health and education, which are the infrastructure of life.

Those who founded this Organization had a vision of a better world. Some of that vision has been achieved. The United Nations decolonization efforts are an important example. The spread of human rights and democracy and United Nations support for the role of women, for a fair trading system, for the protection of the environment — all these achievements must be recognized and celebrated.

Today the generation raised in the shadow of the cold war has the opportunity to direct its energy to the protection and enhancement of the planet, not its destruction, and to use technology to share information, provide education and enhance the wonders of medical science.

Let us put religious and other differences to one side and learn to live with diversity. There is so much we can accomplish by working together.

To achieve these goals, and more, we will have to renew our Organization. The Security Council must be reformed, and waste and duplication eliminated. Members of the United Nations must break the bad habit of expecting something for nothing. To make our Organization work, all must pay their dues.

The United Nations is a bold concept. It brings the nations of the world together in a grand coalition to share the burden of building a better and more peaceful world. Let each of us, in this fiftieth-anniversary year, renew our commitment to achieving that goal, and in doing so pay tribute to those who have pursued the work of the United Nations these last 50 years.

17. The Republic of Poland

Address by
H.E. Mr. Jozef Oleksy, Prime Minister

The present jubilee of the United Nations is conducive to joint reflection on the state of the world today, a reflection focused on concern for the fate of what is only one Earth.

For several years now, the world order imposed by the cold war, founded upon a confrontational, bipolar power arrangement, a balance of terror and military might, has passed into history. We must therefore participate soberly and imaginatively in a forward-looking manner, refusing to be swayed by stereotypes, complexes and old resentments, in the process of shaping our mutual relations.

Let the evolution of my country's relations with Germany serve as an example. It was Poland which a year ago proposed to the General Assembly that the archaic enemy-States clause be removed from the United Nations Charter. "Cold peace" is not an acceptable option as a prescription for our post-cold-war times. We must not allow new Berlin Walls, this time of an economic nature, or Iron Curtains, cutting across the continent and separating nations, to re-emerge in Europe. We need more Channel Tunnels.

The message behind these observations reaches beyond the old continent. Overcoming the development gap between North and South, along with its grave social implications, must become the overriding goal of this Organization. It must at last spur us to action, not merely provoke lamentations over supposedly inexorable trends.

Every State can and should take a critical and creative view of its geopolitical situation. Let us seek friends near and far and enemies nowhere. Let me again refer to my own country. We have traditionally — and, for that matter, not unreasonably — regarded Poland's geopolitical situation to be unfavourable, even disastrous. More than once it was Poland's lot to be caught in a vice. Now we now have learned the lesson, and we know how to make the most of our situation. Poland has a chance of acting as a keystone between Atlantic Europe and the east of Europe. After all, it borders countries of both the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Commonwealth of Independent States. We seek to contribute to uniting Europe. We have succeeded in concluding treaties of friendship and good-neighbourly relations with each and every one of our neighbours. After all, not one of them is exactly the same neighbour that we had only a few years ago.

The cornerstone of the foreign policy pursued by the successive Governments of Poland after 1989 has been a determined "drive to Europe", an orientation towards integration with the European Union and entry into the Euro-Atlantic structures. In no way does this mean turning our back on others, whether in the East — especially Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic States — or the South — the regions and nations of the third world, including China, which is the largest and, in the last few years, the fastest growing of them all. Despite the burden of the radical reforms under way, we do not intend to shut ourselves within our borders or those of the subregion.

Our rank among the nations committing Blue Helmets to the various trouble spots around the globe is conclusive evidence that we are capable of looking beyond our own back yard. It is with this intent that we have resolved to seek election to the Security Council, a supreme body responsible for maintaining peace on a global scale.

Of a similar stamp is Poland's active role in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe, as well as our guest status in the Non-Aligned Movement. All this is in tune with and complements our striving to enter the European Union, NATO, the Western European Union and, hopefully, before very long, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). That is how we understand active sovereignty. Everyone should ask himself the question, "What can I do to help others, to build a better world?"

We often try to fend off charges levelled — fairly or otherwise — at the United Nations, as if they had nothing to do with us. Yet the credit or blame for its effectiveness or inefficiency falls on us. That depends on the degree of consensus in our midst and our readiness to contribute to the Organization's budget and support its activities in various fields. Both are crucial also to the fate of reforms in the United Nations system, improved coordination of its actions and a better harmonization of its objectives, as the developing countries urge, not without justification.

The world needs devoted leadership, commitment and far-sighted vision as much as it needs oxygen. It needs perseverance in the promotion of trust between States and their organizations, between nations and between people. In developing these values and providing enlightened guidelines, a reinforced United Nations can and should play a special role with a view to transcending global zero-sum games.

If we, the United Nations — united not, as 50 years ago, against someone, but driven by the desire for peaceful cooperation — show sufficient determination to give effect to our own proposals at this Meeting and at major conferences such as those held under United Nations auspices in recent years, the world stands a chance of ensuring a better and safer life in the twenty-first century. It stands a chance of ensuring lasting peace and sustained development for all and ensuring respect for the rights of the citizens of this globe. It stands a chance of realizing the lofty purposes of the Charter, which remains the Organization's signpost in the service of the United Nations.

18. Norway

Address by
H.E. Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister

To millions of people, the United Nations has meant food where there was none, vaccination where epidemics raged, a school to attend, a new well in the village, and Blue Helmets who kept belligerents apart, shielding civil life.

To scores of new nations, access to this rostrum meant sovereignty and self-determination. From this rostrum, for 50 years, all countries have been able to call for world attention.

To the hundreds of thousands of good and dedicated people who have served the United Nations, let us pay our tribute. To the peace-keepers and field-workers who did not return, among them our second Secretary-General, let us pay our respect.

But let us not only commemorate the past. Let us also chart a new beginning. Though the United Nations today faces great difficulties, we, the Member States, are responsible.

The ploughshare that worked for five decades is worn. Let us forge a new one.

Today I will address five pressing issues.

First, there is the issue of finance. Some dozen parliaments hold this Organization hostage by withholding their membership fees. How unworthy. We must all pay our fees in full and on time. We require some countries to pay more than their fair share. Other countries voluntarily pay more than their fair share. Many countries pay too little or hardly anything at all.

Secondly, we must reform. Change and renewal is a must for every effective organization. Reform of the Security Council is needed, where the issue of a regionally balanced enlargement now must be addressed — the most obvious candidates being, of course, Japan and Germany — while the Council's decision-making efficiency must be retained and its implementation ability greatly enhanced.

Responsibility for sustainable development, poverty, population, education and the environment is spread out. Mandates overlap. Let us draw up a schedule for implementing what we have decided in Rio, Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing. We meant what we said. Now, let us do it.

Thirdly, we must coordinate our humanitarian assistance activities better, allowing us to react more quickly and more effectively. Funds, people and resources often prove to be available only when human suffering has worsened enough to dominate the evening news, while other tragedies of famine, environmental degradation and underdevelopment remain unnoticed.

Fourthly, we must improve our peace-keeping and conflict-prevention capacity to save more lives and to save expenses. Delayed action is costly in terms of human suffering and resources, and more countries must contribute. We need better stand-by arrangements; we need sharing of experience and training.

Fifthly, we must build the civilized world on law and contract, an international society where the strong are just and the weak secure, as President Kennedy of the United States phrased it right here in this Hall. We need affirmative action in the interest of our poorest members. We need an international public or civic sector and a conscientious human rights watch here in the United Nations. We must bring justice where the limits are overstepped and support the new international courts, including an international criminal court, to make a civilized world.

A new step towards this civilized world will be taken when the Middle East peace process is successfully completed. A new step towards this civilized world will be taken when anti-personnel mines are prohibited, so that the children of war-torn areas can walk safely in the fields. A new step towards this civilized world will be taken when the new test ban takes effect.

There can be no civilized world unless we unite to strengthen multilateralism. In this endeavour, the United Nations is our repository of hope.

19. Spain

Address by
H.E. Mr. Felipe González, President of the Government

[*Delivered in Spanish*]

As President of the Government of Spain and on behalf of the European Union, I have particular satisfaction in addressing the General Assembly in this solemn Special Commemorative Meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, presided over by such an eminent personality as Professor Freitas do Amaral and with the presence of the Secretary-General, whose work deserves our recognition.

The birth of our Organization, so closely linked to the end of a tragic war, enshrined certain principles that formed the basis of the common effort to fulfil mankind's aspirations: peace, freedom, human dignity and economic and social progress.

The great suffering caused in Europe by the wars that during this century pitted our peoples against each other made us look upon the purposes and principles of the Charter of San Francisco for the inspiration required to bring together our wills.

The European Union is a common project for living together in peace, for shared political, economic and social values, which has enabled Europe to re-emerge from its ashes and to establish itself as a focal point of stability and progress in the international arena.

This project is driven by our solidarity in the task of building an international community which is freer, more just and safer.

The European Union salutes the achievements of the Organization and reiterates its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter. The universality of the United Nations reinforces its role as a centre for harmonizing the efforts to advance on this path. One cannot conceive of today's world without considering the contribution of the United Nations to the process of decolonization, to environment and development issues, and to the consecration of innovative concepts, such as the common heritage of mankind. The fundamental contribution of our Organization to the maintenance of international peace and security, to disarmament and the prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to the codification of international law and to the protection and promotion of human rights attests to the universality of the United Nations and constitutes its legitimizing force.

These achievements do not conceal the setbacks suffered by the United Nations, nor its structural and management problems. Its shortcomings, which we all share with the Organization, must be surmounted through honest and profound reflection, if it is to successfully confront the challenges facing us at the close of this century.

The European Union has been able to express in concrete terms its commitment to the United Nations. The 15 States members of the Union represent, collectively and by far, the main contributor to the budgets of this Organization, as well as the main contributor of personnel to peace-keeping operations. The European Union is also the principal donor of funds for humanitarian assistance and for development cooperation.

Furthermore, the States members of the European Union have submitted initiatives with a view to promoting the ideals of the Organization in areas such as disarmament, human rights and humanitarian assistance.

The political commitment of the Member States to the Organization and the contribution of adequate resources represent for the European Union two inseparable aspects of the support that the United Nations needs. Only the existence of a viable financial basis will allow for the success of the efforts towards the revitalization of the United Nations system, to which the European Union attaches great importance. Hence, the Union hopes that all States, large and small, will contribute to this task through the full, punctual and unconditional fulfilment of their financial obligations.

We need an effective Organization — one that responds to the conflicts with an enhanced capacity for preventive diplomacy and humanitarian assistance, for peace-keeping and peacemaking and for rehabilitation and reconstruction once conflicts have been overcome.

There is a need for the United Nations system to intensify its work with a view to eradicating hunger and poverty, unemployment and social marginalization; to protecting human rights; and to promoting education, health, and the equality of men and women. There is also a need for the United Nations to coordinate the efforts towards sustainable development that reaches everyone and allows for the preservation of our environment and the welfare of future generations. In this endeavour, we need, finally, to commit and arouse the enthusiasm of all sectors of our respective societies, especially the young, so that their concerns may inspire our efforts.

Only thus shall we be able to secure the foundations of peace for the better and more just world that we want. This is the demanding task that continues to give a profound meaning to our Organization. In the pursuit of this collective task the United Nations can rely on the active commitment of the European Union.

20. Japan

Address by
H.E. Mr. Tomiichi Murayama, Prime Minister

[Delivered in Japanese; interpretation provided by the delegation]

It gives me great pleasure to join this gathering on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

At the outset, I should like to convey two messages.

First, I wish to express the gratitude of the people of Japan to the international community. At the time the United Nations was founded Japan was striving to recover from the devastation of the war and to engage in national reconstruction. Firmly resolved that the scourge of war must never be repeated, Japan adopted its Peace Constitution. Since then, in accordance with its basic philosophy as a peace-loving nation — including non-resort to the use of force prohibited by its Constitution — Japan has made cooperation with the United Nations an important pillar of its foreign policy and has thus been contributing actively to the peace and prosperity of the international community. Japan has never forgotten the support it received from many members of the international community in building the economic prosperity it enjoys today.

Secondly, I should like to stress that the role of the United Nations is growing and diversifying. As we approach the next century, how humankind will deal with the population explosion is becoming a serious issue. As a result, securing a stable food supply and environmental protection are becoming greater challenges. It is also of increasing importance that we deal effectively with other global issues, such as those of refugees and AIDS. Moreover, we are witnessing with profound concern the grave conflicts arising from religious and ethnic rivalries that transcend national boundaries. In many instances poverty and social instability lie at the root of these difficult problems. The United Nations has an increasingly important role to play in addressing these issues more effectively and in building world peace and prosperity.

What is required of us if the United Nations is to play such a role is that we not limit our concern to the nation State level, but also that we focus our efforts on the well-being of each and every one of "Earth's citizens". The part to be played by women and non-governmental organizations continues to grow. Hence a new concept — human security — in addition to that of national security, has emerged as a major challenge for the United Nations.

This concept, which embraces respect for the human rights of every citizen on Earth and the protection of each of us from poverty, disease, ignorance, oppression and violence, is consonant with my own political principles. Since I became Prime Minister, the creation of a human-centred society, in which all citizens are treated equally and are able to realize their full potential, has been pivotal to my administration's policy. At the World Summit for Social Development last March I emphasized people-centred social development as an area of priority.

As a leading donor country, Japan has been supporting the concept of sustainable development, has been providing assistance for the promotion of democracy and economic reform and has been striving to extend a broad range of economic cooperation, including cooperation to meet global challenges. Japan is also advocating a new development strategy that focuses on combining various policy measures in a comprehensive manner. It intends to play an even more expanded role in these areas. Japan also stands ready to cooperate more actively for peace in such areas as humanitarian assistance; preventive diplomacy and peace-keeping operations; and arms control and disarmament, in respect of nuclear weapons as well as conventional weapons such as anti-personnel land-mines and small arms.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is also the fiftieth year since the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is time for us to accelerate our efforts towards the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. I thus find it all the more deplorable that nuclear testing continues at this juncture. I strongly call for the immediate cessation of nuclear testing. To this end, it is extremely important that a resolution calling for cessation be adopted during this session of the General Assembly, with the support of as many Member States as possible. I also believe that it is a most urgent task, as a major step towards nuclear disarmament, to complete the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty by next spring and to sign it by next autumn.

In our statement during the general debate we outlined Japan's position on the reforms that are necessary if the United Nations is to be able to fulfil its mission.

First, Japan, which has been playing a major role as the second largest contributor, earnestly calls upon all Member States to face up to the financial crisis of the United Nations, to honour their financial obligations and to urgently and seriously address the question of United Nations financial reform.

Secondly, it is increasingly necessary to reform the United Nations system in the economic and social fields. Improving the efficiency and reviewing the mandates of the Economic and Social Council and other related organs are pressing tasks. From this perspective, Japan will continue actively to participate in the discussions on an Agenda for Development so that it can make its distinctive contribution.

Thirdly, with regard to the reform of the Security Council, its functions must be strengthened by enhancing its effectiveness and its legitimacy. This will necessitate an expansion of the Council that includes an increase in its permanent membership and improvement in its working methods, for example through enhanced transparency. I should like to urge that Member States work expeditiously to reach an agreement on a broad framework of reform that includes these elements by the time this General Assembly session concludes next September.

We have only five years left to the twenty-first century. Humankind has reached the stage at which we should all join hands and advance together so that the coming century will be one of hope in which we can look forward to the creation and development of a new global civilization. On this occasion, I should like to reaffirm the determination that the people of Japan made 50 years ago to live in peace, trusting in the justice and faith of the peace-loving peoples of the world.

I should like to conclude my statement today with the assurance that, as the exploration of a new vision for the United Nations continues, Japan will attach ever-greater importance to and enhance its support for the Organization. In order to bring about world peace and eradicate poverty and inequality, Japan will do its utmost to contribute to the international community on the basis of the universal ideals of freedom and democracy.

21. Switzerland

Address by

H.E. Mr. Jakob Kellenberger, Secretary of State

[Delivered in French]

To the United Nations, celebrating its fiftieth anniversary today, I have the honour of addressing the congratulations of the Swiss Government. Notwithstanding its observer status, Switzerland feels very directly involved in this event. Fifty years ago, the founding Members of the United Nations decided to be the joint guarantors of international peace and security and to promote human rights and social and economic development in the world. In the United Nations, we have today a sound tool for global policy-making that enables us, day by day and year by year, to build our future.

The expectations in this respect are as great as the means and the instruments are modest. In spite of all this, the United Nations stands at the heart of the international order and will in the years ahead play a decisive role in the establishment of a global system of human security.

Since the end of the cold war, the United Nations has been called upon as never before to play its role of guarding and promoting international peace and security. This resurgence of activity has impelled the Organization to seek new ways of optimizing the implementation of the concept of collective security and of further developing the underlying philosophy of peace-keeping operations.

Together with protection for the weakest in the event of a disaster or conflict, respect for human rights has become one of the basic principles of the United Nations. Indeed, peace and security can be guaranteed within the community of States only if citizens enjoy their fundamental rights and freedoms. This is possible only if the law stands above political power. Thus, by means of numerous treaties, covenants and conferences, the United Nations has moved the international community to make major strides in identifying shared priorities and principles.

The United Nations is deeply involved in managing the socio-economic upheavals that characterize the end of the twentieth century. The challenges affecting all mankind have been or will be the focus of major United Nations conferences that will have to help us identify solutions in a certain number of areas, all relating to global human security.

The objectives of the United Nations converge with the priorities of Switzerland's foreign policy. An active commitment to the promotion of international law in general and to the peaceful settlement of disputes in particular is a constant of that policy. The strengthening, implementation and verification of norms relating to human rights, as well as the promotion of democracy and the concept of a State based upon the rule of law, are all priority areas of Switzerland's international commitment.

In the same vein, Switzerland has been supporting United Nations peace-keeping operations to the extent of its capabilities. Just like the United Nations, Switzerland realizes that strengthened international cooperation is the only way to meet the technological, economic, social and environmental challenges facing mankind as the third millennium draws near. Switzerland will in future seek to enhance its cooperation with the United Nations and make every effort to provide the Organization with the intellectual, operational and financial support one is entitled to expect from our country.

This convergence of views prompts the Swiss Government's desire to pursue membership in the United Nations as an objective of its foreign policy. Our Government is thus striving to maintain an ongoing dialogue with the Swiss people to enable them to become aware of the changing face of international cooperation and of United Nations activities.

In Geneva, Switzerland is the host country to the United Nations and numerous other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Switzerland deems the presence on its soil of international organizations to be highly important and is determined to spare no effort to ensure that Geneva remains a special venue for international organizations and conferences. To this end, it will endeavour to contribute to enhancing the working conditions of the bodies of the United Nations and of the other international organizations established in Geneva.

On the occasion of these fiftieth anniversary festivities, Switzerland wishes not only to extend to the United Nations its warmest congratulations, but also to thank the Organization for having created the conditions for constructive international cooperation. The future that the Swiss Government hopes to share with the United Nations cannot but be built on intensive and fruitful cooperation.

22. Palestine

Address by

H.E. Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee
of the Palestine Liberation Organization

[*Delivered in Arabic*]

It gives me great pleasure, Sir, on behalf of the Palestinian people and its leadership in the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian National Authority, to express to you and to your friendly country our congratulations as you preside over this historic meeting, which crowns 50 years of international action.

I also wish to salute the Kings, Presidents and Heads of delegations of the countries participating in this meeting. I also salute Mr. Boutros-Ghali for his principled positions and tireless efforts. I salute the United Nations.

Our meeting today affords us an important opportunity to take stock of the United Nations experience and to reaffirm our commitment to its Charter for a world of peace and security and a better future for mankind.

The history of the United Nations is intertwined with that of the question of Palestine. It was the United Nations that adopted the resolution on the partition of Palestine into two States: one Jewish and one Arab. Since then, the United Nations has not ceased to deal with the question of Palestine in all its ramifications and developments.

The history of the United Nations and its resolutions constitute an expression of its permanent legal, political and moral responsibility, which makes the United Nations a witness to the immense suffering of our people and their sacrifices, their displacement and scattering to all parts of the world, as well as the wars and massacres which have been inflicted upon them. Nevertheless, they persisted in their struggle and their *intifadah* for survival and for the affirmation of their national identity.

Hence the importance of the United Nations continuing role. It should continue to sponsor our Palestinian cause, alongside the Israeli-Palestinian agreements, until the implementation of our inalienable national rights, including the right of our people to return, self-determination and national independence.

The initiative of President Bush for the peace process and the Madrid Conference, and later the meetings in Washington, was made on the basis of United Nations resolutions, and the Palestinian-Israeli agreements in Oslo, Cairo, Taba, Washington and others, were based on United Nations resolutions, particularly Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), as well as on the principle of land-for-peace.

This means that the United Nations has an abiding responsibility towards the cause of our people, particularly because such fundamental issues as the questions of Al-Quds, of refugees, of the settlements and of the final borders, have been left to the final stage.

Our people have continued to affirm their support for the peace process. When we embarked upon the peace process, which was approved by our National Council, Central Council and all other organizational units, the peace option became an irreversible Palestinian decision. It springs from our people's desire to turn over the leaf of killing and destruction once and for all, so that the Palestinian people and the Israel people may live side by side, in two independent States on the basis of mutual respect.

This historic Palestinian-Israeli reconcilation must be carried through as envisaged. It must be completed on all the other Arab-Israeli tracks, particularly the Lebanese and Syrian tracks, so that peace may be just and comprehensive and include also the Iraqi and the Libyan peoples.

In spite of all the difficulties we are determined to press forward to complete the transitional stage and enter into negotiations on the final status. I should like to seize this opportunity to express our appreciation to the sponsors of the peace process, the United States and the Russian Federation, especially for the support of President Clinton and his good efforts and that of his assistants, and for the efforts of President Yeltsin. I should also like to express appreciation for the efforts made by President Mubarak of Egypt, in particular to give the process a push forward, and the efforts of Their Majesties King Fahd, King Hassan II and King Hussein, as well as those of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, President Zeroual and President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the permanent members of the Security Council, the member States of the European Union and Japan and the efforts of Mr. Boutros-Ghali, Norway and the Arab, Islamic, African and Non-Aligned States.

We emphasize our need for their support in order for our people to succeed in its endeavour, to rebuild its infrastructure which has been destroyed by the occupation, to end its dispersal and to build its political system on the foundations of democratic pluralism and freedom.

The winds of change are blowing in our world. A new world order is emerging. It is our responsibility in the United Nations and in the international community to make it a good order for the stability, security and peace of the world, with the wider participation of the States and peoples of the world. We therefore support the trend towards the expansion of the membership of the Security Council, which will give it new vigour and will ensure justice and equality for all.

I came to this Assembly 21 years ago as a fighter for freedom, liberation and independence, carrying with me the torments of my struggling people.

Today, however, I come to you with a heart filled with love and peace, now that the olive branch has been raised over the peace of the brave.

Our people yearns for peace. The prophecy of good tidings has been heralded. Help us bring it to fulfilment, help us bring it to fulfilment.

B. Statements delivered at the 36th plenary meeting held on 22 October 1995

1. The Portuguese Republic

Address by
H.E. Mr. Mário Alberto Nobre Lopes Soares, President

[Delivered in Portuguese. English text provided by the delegation]

It is an honour to take part in this historic session presided over by my illustrious compatriot, Diogo Freitas do Amaral. I wish to reiterate to him, here, the high regard and esteem in which I hold him.

I wish also to extend warm greetings to Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali, whose thinking and efforts on behalf of the restructuring of the United Nations have earned my full support. This session constitutes a unique opportunity to assess the work of the United Nations. But we should also take advantage of this occasion to debate the future. This is a good opportunity to consolidate that which should be consolidated and to reform that which should be reformed.

Tribute must be paid to the United Nations for its steadfast efforts in the furtherance of peace, dialogue and development. The difficulties and frustrations encountered have been, for the most part, the responsibility of the Member States. At other times, they stem from a serious lack of finances. Such difficulties can be overcome only if States — both large and small — recognize that the world has changed, that the will of peoples and international public opinion count today. The strength of the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations represents a powerful stimulus in favour of democracy, human rights and peace. Outstanding examples of this are the decolonization movement, in which a democratic Portugal participated actively, and, subsequently, the struggle to abolish apartheid.

For that reason, allow me to refer to the outrageous situation that continues to prevail in the Non-Self-Governing Territory of East Timor, which still awaits the conclusion of a decolonization process brutally interrupted by 20 years of occupation by Indonesia.

In a rapidly changing world, in the face of unstoppable processes of globalization, the United Nations must do everything it can to ensure that changes occur without serious disruptions and in the service of all mankind, as called for in the recent appeal of the Copenhagen Conference.

We must, however, have the courage to recognize that the gap that separates the poor countries from the wealthy is growing ever wider and is becoming truly explosive.

In the communications society in which we live, it has become clear that all the world's peoples aspire to take part in solving the overall problems of mankind. Everything affects everyone. And such participation today also means the sharing of scientific knowledge, technology and information. These ongoing changes call for a global strategy which obviously requires the restructuring of the United Nations system.

Will we be capable of ensuring peace, our most precious asset? Of imposing the rule of law? Of putting an end to poverty, underdevelopment, fanaticism and ignorance?

The key concept for a new approach is prevention. The current system's inability to respond, in physical, material and financial terms, in a timely and effective manner to the need for intervention in conflicts has made it especially clear in the last few years that the best strategy and, in the final analysis, oddly enough, the one that entails the lesser financial burden is the prevention of crises and conflicts. This calls to mind the following phrase used by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO):

> "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed".

It is therefore essential to take action everywhere to promote dialogue and tolerance, instituting, as Mr. Federico Mayor has said, a true "culture of peace". Peace can be built only by struggling against violence in all its forms — including in the mass media, by creating conditions of greater equality among human beings, and by educating people in the values of humanism, democracy and solidarity.

One area in which the potential of the United Nations seems to me to be particularly encouraging is that of the world's oceans. Within the United Nations, it has been possible to establish a new international legal order for the oceans, based on the principles of peaceful utilization, cooperation, and development of the capabilities of every nation.

It is my intention to foster the process of international study of the opportunities and challenges afforded by ocean exploration, with a view to the imperative need to preserve and protect them. This plan is naturally of special significance to a maritime nation like Portugal and is consistent with the recent United Nations initiative to proclaim 1998 as the "International Year of the Oceans". That is also the year in which an international exhibition is to be held in Lisbon devoted to the theme "The Oceans, a Heritage for the Future".

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is an opportunity to think about what the future should be. We must do so optimistically, assuming our responsibilities towards future generations and passing this on to our youth. This optimism must be built on a realistic basis, in a spirit of solidarity. It is incumbent on each and every one of us, as human beings, at this dawn of a new millennium, to commit ourselves, boldly and creatively, to building a different future for humanity, a future free of wars, with a sense of sharing in a common venture and a common destiny, in this home, which is common to us all and which we must preserve — the planet Earth.

2. The People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Address by
H.E. Mr. Liamine Zeroual, President

[Delivered in Arabic]

In the history of mankind and mankind's progress towards the attainment of its ideals, the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations represents an ideal moment for us to engage in collective introspection and to prepare conditions favourable to a new point of departure for our Organization — collective introspection which should enable us to take stock of the state of affairs in our common planetary home and a new point of departure which we should make possible through a healthy rehabilitation of the values and ideals upon which the United Nations was founded.

Through this commemoration, it is those values and ideals which are favourable to the aspirations of all peoples after peace, security and shared prosperity that we are celebrating and we do so with all the more faith even if the hopes embodied in the United Nations have been frustrated and the Organization's work remains incomplete.

The fact that the United Nations has seen its membership approach universality in its 50 years of existence bears witness to the existence of a fortunate convergence between the trail that was blazed by the Charter and the course that has been followed by many of our peoples. The fact that the United Nations was able to foster the vast liberation movement that delivered peoples from the yoke of colonial domination, holds its rightful place among the causes of satisfaction that give today's event its full meaning.

Similarly, the United Nations has woven the fabric of cooperation amongst States — a cooperation which has made it possible to spread the benefits of the mastery that mankind has achieved over nature in various spheres of life.

In this regard, my country welcomes the important and effective action by numerous organs of the United Nations system which have rendered invaluable services, especially to the developing world, thus fuelling our hopes for ever-greater achievements that would be more widely shared.

At the same time, in the course of these past 50 years, the United Nations has been the mirror that faithfully reflected the contradictions, trials and conflicts which have filled so many pages in mankind's tormented history. Instead of becoming the centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of common ends as envisaged in the Charter, the United Nations became a closed arena where power politics were deployed in the pursuit of exclusive and narrow interests in a climate of confrontation.

However, let us be fair to our Organization and let us recognize that the weaknesses and shortcomings of the work of the United Nations could not be viewed in isolation from the limits that Member States have imposed upon their cooperation, in particular with respect to international peace, security and development.

The end of the cold war has released vast energies and has lowered the barriers that prevented the United Nations from realizing its full potential. Accordingly, the fiftieth anniversary, if the Organization is to prove equal to our legitimate aspirations and ambitions, should afford us an ideal opportunity to make a collective breakthrough towards the realization of the promise of a more equitable and peaceful international society.

The United Nations has miraculously survived the perils that burdened the past 50 years of its life, perils that impeded the discharge of its mission, weakened its effectiveness and, consequently, generated among our peoples, feelings of frustration that have been, at times, quite deep. Nevertheless the United Nations continued and will continue to be the crucible of a great many expectations and hopes.

On the threshold of the twenty-first century, the peoples of the United Nations, whose national systems are increasingly converging towards pluralistic democracy, the protection of all human rights and the promotion of a market economy, are entitled to redouble their expectations with regard to the responsibilities the Organization has to shoulder and what major objectives it should achieve.

What is needed here is that the elimination of colonialism should be fully completed. What is needed also is that conflict situations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Middle East, the Western Sahara and in all other regions should be addressed and resolved in conformity with justice and law. Also expected of the United Nations is to address the need to combat the scourge of terrorism which is a new form of destabilization of States and an infringement of international security. That scourge should be combated resolutely through a renewed international cooperation.

There is also the process of nuclear disarmament which needs to be expanded and stepped up. The environment needs to be protected in the face of new dangers that threaten man and his world.

Finally, there is the need to consolidate the role of the United Nations through the institution of reforms that would make it the truly legitimate representative and efficient instrument which the convergence and cohesion of the political will of Member States will enable to face up to the major challenges of our day.

These are the focal points of the work that lies before mankind on this solemn occasion of celebrating the passage of 50 years since the United Nations was founded.

Algeria, which is resolved to shoulder all its regional and international responsibilities, will always be an active and committed partner in all sincere efforts aimed at guaranteeing future generations the benefit of all the values and ideals of the United Nations, values and ideals that will lead to an advanced, prosperous, just, harmonious and peaceful international society.

3. The Republic of Kazakstan

Address by
H.E. Mr. Nursultan A. Nazarbaev, President

[Delivered in Russian]

It is a great honour for me to represent the Republic of Kazakstan at this historic meeting. Allow me to congratulate all those present on this truly remarkable occasion, the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

We are living in a dynamically changing world. Today's international structures do not always effectively respond to new realities. This is only natural.

The World War that began in 1914 brought about the League of Nations. The Second World War gave birth to the United Nations. The collapse of the bipolar world and the new geopolitical and economic realities demand the renewal of international bodies. History itself teaches us this.

Could anyone involved in the elaboration of the Versailles security system have foreseen that in 20 years' time there would be the biggest bloodletting in the history of humanity? The result was the collapse of the first structure for world cooperation.

Who at the time of the creation of the United Nations could have foreseen a prolonged cold war between the two world systems, resulting in an unexpected collapse of one of them? Could anyone have imagined 10 years ago that one of the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement and a prosperous State of Europe — I am referring to Yugoslavia — would soon be torn apart and would sink in the blood of innocent people?

Today, as we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we stand at the threshold of a new era in the development of global structures.

No international structure on the eve of twenty-first century will be capable of effectively resolving the issues of global security and social and political development without taking into consideration the new global balances, which are already being reflected today in the emergence of new centres of power in Western Europe, South-East Asia and North America. I stated Kazakstan's view on this issue at the United Nations Conference on Disarmament in Geneva last June.

Today we should be grateful to the United Nations for its effective endeavours, which have helped us all to avert potential global disasters in the second half of the twentieth century. This is an undoubted accomplishment of the United Nations and its principal bodies and structures.

This will enable us immediately after the General Assembly Special Commemorative Meeting to concentrate our efforts on the elaboration of a conceptual model of a renewed United Nations. Such a model should incorporate not only the basic principles for reforming the United Nations, but new goals, objectives and functions for the United Nations of the twenty-first century as well.

I believe that the United Nations goals and purposes are clear for everyone. They are peace, sustainable development, human security and genuine democratization of the highest international bodies to create a united family of peoples and nations. In this context, I should like to elaborate on a few specific aspects.

First, the role of the Security Council in the resolution of the global issues of our day should be reinforced. To this end, first of all Germany and Japan should become full members of the Security Council. At the same time, steps should be taken so that the views of the States of all regions receive wider consideration in that body.

Secondly, the interaction of global and regional security systems should be enhanced. Today we should take into account that international security systems can be built not only from the top, but also from the bottom, at the regional level.

In Central Asia we keenly feel the need to enhance this regional aspect. That concern lies behind Kazakstan's initiatives concerning the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia and Eurasian union and our active cooperation within the Economic Cooperation Organization. Moreover, the contours of the biggest regional market are taking shape today in Central Asia, where many Asian, Commonwealth of Independent States and European countries could participate. In addition to this, many issues for the development of the region have global importance.

This pertains first of all to the issue of the effective transportation of oil and gas resources of the region, to meet the needs of the development of the world economy in the twenty-first century, as well as to the efforts to combat the transit of drugs and to the cooperative efforts of the world community to preserve the Aral Sea. Unless urgent steps are taken, the environmental consequences of the Aral disaster can easily become an issue of great concern for Eurasia as a whole.

Hence, we must face the most important question: how the renewed United Nations is to interact with the regional and continental system of security and cooperation? There are two different roles that the United Nations may play. The first is the role of a single centre of global security, whose decisions are strictly binding for all regional systems. The shortcoming of such a centre is that the United Nations can unwittingly take the side of one of the parties in a conflict, thus hindering the natural evolution of other growing centres of power in the world.

A second option is the role of an international coordinating body, which would act as the highest independent arbitrator in resolving disputes and clashes between regional structures. The shortcoming here is that it may not be in a position to take timely and effective decisions and prevent a conflict.

Thirdly, similar problems will arise, not only in military and strategic areas but in all areas of human activity — culture, information, science and technology, finance and the economy. This brings us to a question: What should the United Nations be in the twenty-first century? Shall it be a supreme body taking decisions binding upon all nations and international bodies, or shall it be a single, global coordinating tool, a structure for balanced cooperation, mediation and supreme arbitration?

We should begin as of today to focus the best minds of the world on the resolution of these issues. But, in so doing, we should avoid irresponsible actions towards the United Nations, as they can unbalance the established system of international relations. Therefore, the selection of a new United Nations model should be well thought through and be a clear expression of the will of all nations of the world.

Finally, if we want the United Nations significantly to minimize the potential for global conflict by the end of this century and increase the chances for peace and development, all we can do is to ensure that each and every one of us willingly contributes his best efforts to the noble task of United Nations reforms. If we manage to address these issues in 1995, then we could consider at some future session of the General Assembly a special agenda item entitled "The United Nations reforms — an adequate response to the challenges of the twenty-first century".

The first issue we will then have to face will be how to finance these changes. Three years ago, at the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, I made a relatively simple and radical proposal to resolve this issue, namely, to set up a fund for peace-keeping efforts with each nation contributing to it by reducing its defence budget by 1 per cent annually. This proposal is still valid.

One last thing: Kazakstan fully shares the goals and proposals in the statement by the President of the United States, William Clinton, for his initiatives coincide with our policy, which is geared towards decisively fighting such present-day scourges as corruption, organized crime and the spread of drugs and terrorism.

I sincerely wish all of us and those who come after us every success in building the United Nations as a united family of peoples and nations.

4. The Azerbaijani Republic

Address by
H.E. Mr. Heydar Alirza ogly Aliyev, President

[*Delivered in Russian*]

On behalf of the people of Azerbaijan and on my own personal behalf I extend heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, which has made a great contribution to strengthening peace, security and stability in our world.

Great positive changes have occurred during the 50 years since the establishment of the United Nations, involving the complete rebuilding of the world and the practical implementation of the principles of the United Nations Charter.

The main point here is that irrespective of the sharp confrontation during the cold war it was possible to avoid a new world war. Colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination have become history. People have won the chance to master their destiny and have obtained national freedom and independence. The proclamation of independence and sovereignty by the republics of the former Soviet Union was a historic event. Confirmation of common human values, particularly the ideas of freedom, democracy and human rights, has become widely expanded. Thoroughgoing democratic changes in State structures, in the economy and in all areas of life have become extremely important factors for many countries.

Each Member State of the United Nations, in particular the big Powers with developed economies and democratic traditions, has made a contribution to strengthening peace and security and the attainment of these results. But the United Nations, which has grown over the past 50 years into the most authoritative and influential international organization in the history of mankind, has played a special role. I believe that the financial difficulties facing the Organization will be overcome and that it will have success in its work in the future.

It is gratifying to us to take note of this and it fills us with admiration, but peace in the world has not become more secure, perfect or ideal. Problems involving the violation of the norms of international law in inter-State relations, international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the elimination of hunger and poverty, and the prevention of environmental disasters all require a radical solution. The appearance of aggressive nationalism and separatism in various regions of the world, which lead to bloody conflicts and to untold suffering for millions of people, remain threats to the peace.

For more than seven years now the aggression of the Republic of Armenia against Azerbaijan has been going on, with the aim of annexing the Nagorny Karabakh region of our country. Armed formations belonging to Armenia have occupied more than 20 per cent of the territory of Azerbaijan. More than 1 million citizens of our country, who are now refugees, have been evicted from the occupied territories and are now living in tent camps in the most difficult circumstances. The Security Council of the United Nations has adopted four resolutions demanding the unconditional withdrawal of Armenian armed formations from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. However, these resolutions are not being implemented by the aggressor and therefore the peace process within the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has so far not yielded the desired results.

I appeal to the distinguished Heads of State and Government, to the United Nations, and to the OSCE to render effective assistance to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, the restoration of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and the inviolability of its internationally recognized borders.

In expressing the will of the people of Azerbaijan, I declare that we condemn all kinds of aggression in any part of the world. We want peace: peace in the whole world, peace in our region, and peace and good-neighbourly relations with all States. It is with this hope and belief that I leave this distinguished rostrum.

5. The Republic of Angola

Address by
H.E. Mr. José Eduardo dos Santos, President

[Delivered in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation]

To all those present I should like to address, on my own behalf and on behalf of all the Angolan people that I have the honour to represent here, my warmest salutations to the United Nations.

The journey has not been easy for our Organization. On the date of its foundation the world was just emerging from a devastating war in which about 50 countries were involved, with a tragic balance of 50 million dead and profound trauma and destruction.

The almost immediate bipolarization of the planet between two antagonistic political and economic systems did not contribute to the easy establishment of just principles in favour of international peace and security, even though the United Nations played a praiseworthy role in the liquidation of colonialism, the promotion of human rights and the rights of people, in encouraging development and international cooperation, and in the management and control of small conflicts all over the world.

However, the logic of the so-called cold war generated a frantic race for armament. It is true that various attempts were being made by the United Nations to promote global disarmament and to restrict nuclear arsenals but they were insufficient to dispel the threat that weighed on humanity.

In spite of the balance of terror between the countries holding nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction, we think that the United Nations should maintain on its agenda the task of completely eliminating such weapons and promoting concrete action to that end.

With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the arrival of new political thinking in international relations, the United Nations can resume its action directed towards the construction of a peaceful new world order.

Unfortunately, the United Nations still has neither the unanimity of its Members nor sufficient means to effectively impose its legitimate will to sanction those who disturb the peace and violate civil and democratic order, international laws and human rights. Meanwhile, the political configuration of the contemporary world, in which local, regional and inter-State conflicts constitute the main areas of international tension and threats to peace, demands that the United Nations assume an ever more active role in the promotion and pursuance of political, economic, and social democratization processes. This is the best way to solve ethnic or inter-State conflicts, which in most cases are caused by immediate situations, actions of tyrannical Governments or exclusion policies almost always associated with the phenomenon of Member States' interference in the affairs of other States.

The promotion and safeguarding of human rights and the solution of humanity's global problems, such as those related to the environment, security and development, constitute another priority for the United Nations. Material wealth and food reserves are concentrated in a few countries of the North. Despite the potential of the South, the scourge of hunger, endemic disease and the shortage of drinking water there affect more than two thirds of the world's population, a number that may increase a great deal in the next century and may constitute one of the greatest threats to peace and stability on the planet.

The proportions reached today by various manifestations of extremism and exclusionary activities, such as terrorism, organized crime, separatism, racism, xenophobia and so on, and the issue of preserving the standard of living on the planet negatively affect inter-State relations and call for solutions to be agreed upon by the international community at the highest level.

Sooner or later, this will require the redefinition of United Nations structures and mechanisms of action, particularly the Security Council, which should continue to be the main organ guaranteeing the preservation of world peace. To that end, it needs to act on a more democratic basis by increasing the number of its permanent members.

Angola considers it urgent, first, to assign a permanent seat in the Security Council to a country from each geographic region that, by its importance, can assume an effective role in the preservation of peace at the regional level and, secondly, to create a body that makes it possible for the various regional mechanisms to function in coordinated and complementary fashion in the search for rapid, effective and balanced solutions to localized conflicts and tensions.

With regard to international economic issues, I believe it is pertinent to say that the world financial system, established under the Bretton Woods institutions, is now inadequate for facing the realities of today's international economic crisis, which is characterized by a widening gap between rich and poor countries and a growing external debt that virtually cancels out any real chances of development. Just as an authentic multipolarization of the world is taking place in the political sphere, in the economic sphere today's reality should be faced through a decentralization of the world financial system. This should be based on both the promotion of commercial integration and regional economic systems and on the strengthening of regional financial institutions in a way that would really encourage self-sustained economic development.

Angola takes a special interest in participating in this fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. Our entire post-independence history has been closely associated with this international Organization, with which we have always been ready to cooperate in order to solve our problems and pacify our region and from which we have always received clear signs of understanding and solidarity.

In particular, I am referring to the acts of aggression against and occupation of part of our territory by the "apartheid" army, condemned by the Security Council in its resolutions; the Namibian independence process; the improvement made in the critical and complex situation in Southern Africa through the conclusion and implementation of the New York Accord of December 1988; the resolution of Angola's internal conflict on the basis of the Bicesse Accords and the Lusaka Protocol; humanitarian aid to refugees and displaced persons; and the participation of the United Nations, since at least 1989, in Angola's reconstruction efforts, of which the recent donor conference in Brussels is the best example.

In this context, the successive visits to Angola by three Secretaries-General of the United Nations — His Excellency Mr. Kurt Waldheim, His Excellency Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar and His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali — deserve to be highlighted for their symbolic and practical significance. All of those visits contributed to advancing efforts for pacification and democratization, not only in Angola but in all of Southern Africa, thus creating ample prospects of economic and social cooperation and development between the countries of the region.

At this very moment, thousands of United Nations soldiers are deployed throughout Angolan territory as guarantors and monitors of the peace process. However, for the mission to be accomplished successfully, it is urgent to accelerate the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol, especially as regards the quartering and disarming of UNITA military forces, their integration into the Angolan armed forces and the de-mining and opening of the main roads for the free movement of people and goods. We hope that all of these tasks will be concluded by March next year so that the Government of unity and national reconciliation can then be established, with cadres from UNITA integrated into it.

I would like to avail myself of this rostrum to thank the entire international community for its contribution to the cause of peace and reconciliation in Angola and the means it recently made available to my country for its economic restoration. I would like to appeal to those present for continued financial, technical and material assistance in the economic recovery of Angola. With such support, the Angolan Government intends to consolidate internal peace and become a credible partner of Your Excellencies' Governments in the promotion of bilateral and multilateral trade and investment and in the consolidation of world peace.

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6. The Republic of Guinea-Bissau

Address by
H.E. Mr. João Bernardo Vieira, President

[Delivered in Portuguese; interpretation from French text provided by the delegation]

On 26 June 1945, 51 countries gathered in the city o
an international conference that culminated in the histor
the United Nations. Today, 22 October 1995, in the cit
States are gathered in this grand General Assembly Hall
fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Char
Organization.

On this occasion I have the great honour and privi
behalf of my country, Guinea-Bissau, to this gathering of
tatives, at a time when the new climate of international rel
and understanding between peoples.

The League of Nations of 1925 and the United N
emerging from great wars that wounded mankind, were
determination to create a framework for international a
foster dialogue and peace.

There can be no doubt that our century will go do
mankind as the century of those two major wars, which
millions of lives; but it will also be remembered as the ce
that divided the world into two blocs for half a century a
of extreme forms of nationalism, with tragic consequenc

This period is also marked by major achievements
mankind in the fields of science and technology.

Our century has seen a re-emergence in the awaren
and citizens of fundamental values of the human person, i
the dignity of the human person, democracy and — abo
peoples to self-determination, which has encourag
decolonization and the eradication of apartheid.

The protection of the environment and the ne
environment are also among our concerns at this time.

A new cultural relationship between man and nature
rules of conduct aimed at preserving the flora and f
diversity have been codified. However, despite these
most of which are the work of our Organization, so
persist.

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The precarious economic situation of third-world countries, especially in Africa, aggravated by the extreme poverty of their populations, especially the most vulnerable, such as the elderly, women and children, is a serious threat to international peace and security.

We welcome the current process of disarmament, whose aims are the reduction of the dangers of conflict and tension in the world.

Today, more than ever, the United Nations Charter is a legal, political and moral frame of reference that cannot be side-stepped in international relations.

Guinea-Bissau is convinced that it is imperative to proceed with the necessary reforms within our Organization in order to better respond to the requirements of contemporary international relations in the light of recent developments, which have profound political, economic and social implications for many countries.

In this regard, we welcome efforts aimed at revitalizing the General Assembly, rationalizing its agenda and expanding the Security Council by increasing the number of members on the basis of equitable geographical distribution.

In the name of the principle of universality and parallel representation of divided countries, allow me to reaffirm on this historic occasion our fervent desire to see the Republic of China in Taiwan join the United Nations.

The world today is facing a growing number of tensions and conflicts that threaten world stability and compromise human progress. It is up to Member States to actively support actions aimed at strengthening the United Nations capacity in the prevention of conflict and the maintenance of peace.

In this respect, I would call for greater dialogue and coordination of our efforts in order to forge a world Organization capable of preserving future generations from the scourge of war and to give the poorest and most helpless true reasons for hope, thus safeguarding the common interests of mankind.

7. The Republic of Belarus

Address by
H.E. Mr. Alyaksandr Lukashenka, President

[*Delivered in Russian*]

I greet all those present on behalf of the Republic of Belarus, a State which, despite the fact that it became independent only four years ago, was a founding member of the United Nations. The people of Belarus made a worthy contribution to the victory over fascism. Our Republic was at the very centre of the world conflagration and lost more than a fourth of its population, but it did not accept fascist tyranny.

The idea of setting up the Organization, an organization capable of ensuring security for all peoples, came to maturity in the crucible of the Second World War. After half a century now, we can say without any doubt that the establishment of the United Nations was truly a historic decision. The prevention of nuclear catastrophe, the collapse of the colonial system, the elimination of apartheid, the unprecedented flights of human genius in science and technology — all of this was achieved, to a large extent, thanks to the Organization whose fiftieth anniversary we are celebrating today.

But the United Nations would do well today to think not so much about what has been done as about what still remains to be done. Unfortunately, on the threshold of the third millennium, the world is still burdened by many problems characteristic of the past: wars; armed conflicts in various regions; terrorism and other types of crime; environmental disasters; poverty; and hunger. Many other things threaten the future of mankind.

The United Nations alone, this universal Organization, which reflects the interests of all peoples of the Earth, can unite the efforts of the community of nations in resolving these problems. We cannot agree with those who cast doubt on the role of the United Nations in the world of the future. Giving up the United Nations would be giving up the very idea of the solidarity of all peoples of Earth in the face of our common problems. If we allowed this to happen, it would be a crime to those who 50 years ago overcame fascism and created this unique mechanism.

I believe that the human mind has made so many discoveries that we need to make the United Nations more effective. We need to find the money for this, and this is possible. The Organization has shown that it was viable in the conditions of the cold war and in bloc confrontation. Now it has to confirm the effectiveness of its actions in our multipolar world. The main thing is to prevent a new rift in the world.

In view of this, we believe the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is fraught with unforeseen consequences for the future of Europe. Belarus, which geographically is at the centre of our continent, has many times in our history been the first to suffer from new confrontation. I am convinced that on the threshold of the third millennium we should not think about the expansion of military and political unions, the placing of nuclear weapons or the expansion of military arsenals. On the contrary, we should try to eliminate the very possibility of wars arising and reduce or completely destroy nuclear weapons.

We can speak here for all to hear because Belarus was the first State in history that voluntarily and without any conditions renounced nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, we found ourselves in a paradoxical situation when our commitment to the ideas of disarmament created serious economic difficulties for the country. We were compelled to divert resources intended for social programmes to destroying weapons that had been accumulated on our territory during the bloc confrontation. I am convinced that for the leaders of the States that participated in the cold war a feeling of justice will prevail and they will help us to resolve this question.

First and foremost, I would like to stress deepening socio-economic roblems in various regions, as well as the division of the world into the poor nd the rich countries. The new independent States are now in the throes of a ery serious socio-economic crisis. The gap, which has been expanding for ears now, has brought no one any good.

We should not, therefore, be surprised at — still less should we fear — he integration processes that are now going on. The growing closeness etween fraternal countries has the effect of uniting efforts to solve common roblems, and it is not a threat to anyone's security or interests.

I am convinced that our peoples will definitely overcome their socio-conomic difficulties. I am convinced that the solution of the economic and ocial problems of Belarus and other countries that used to be part of the oviet Union will be in the interests of all United Nations Members. Peace nd security on Earth are impossible without economic well-being and social ability for the newly independent States.

Another problem — a growing problem and, quite literally, a deadly reat to the security of our peoples — is the worsening environmental tuation in the world. The people of Belarus have suffered most of all from e major environmental disaster of our time — the Chernobyl accident. More an 40 per cent of the radioactive particles fell on our territory, and the untry was forced to divert more than 20 per cent of its budget to deal with e consequences of this disaster. I hope that the United Nations will not

abandon the peoples that suffered from the Chernobyl disaster and leave them to deal with the tragedy themselves.

New threats facing mankind in the late twentieth century cannot be dealt with by peoples unless they renounce national egoism. The major States must think not about diktat, not about subjugating peoples to their influence, but about leadership in the solution of problems facing mankind. Although some people do not like to hear this, the best instrument for coordinating the interests of all peoples is still the United Nations. My country will do everything in its power to make this Organization live up to the hopes placed in it by our peoples.

8. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Address by
H.E. Mr. Stojan Andov, Acting President

[*Delivered in Macedonian; English text provided by the delegation*]

My country's address to this eminent world gathering was to have been given by the President of the Republic of Macedonia, Kiro Gligorov. He is unable to be here, for he is undergoing medical treatment following the deplorable terrorist attack on his life. Fortunately, the assassination attempt did not achieve its political aim: to destabilize the Republic of Macedonia, to change its democratic and peaceful course and its role as key component of peace in the southern Balkans. This policy will remain the permanent and strategic orientation of the Republic of Macedonia.

I should like to take this opportunity, on behalf on the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, to express sincere appreciation for the support and sympathy that representatives from the United Nations and numerous Heads of State have conveyed to the Republic of Macedonia at this sensitive time.

The gains that have been made through the existence of the United Nations are major and significant indeed. The Charter has survived the test of the past five decades and continues to be the basic framework on which world peace, security, cooperation and economic and social development can successfully be built.

In the past five decades the world has changed substantially. As a result — and quite rightly — we all face the issue of the need for reform of the Organization. The reforms we envisage are, above all, aimed at increasing the efficiency of the work done by the United Nations and its bodies, strengthening the role of the United Nations in preserving world peace, enhancing collective security and harmonizing global economic and social development and political cooperation.

The Republic of Macedonia has shown itself to be a key factor for peace in the southern Balkans. We have opted for a peaceful and legitimate course to achieve for the Macedonian people the right to self-determination and independence. We have opted for a peaceful approach and for political negotiations for dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and have refused to take part in the inter-ethnic war in its regions. We have opted for refraining from the use of force to violate existing borders and have proclaimed independence within the constitutional and internationally recognized borders. We have also actively carried out the policy of good-neighbourliness and equidistance towards our neighbours and, thus, overcome the historic causes of what has been a bone of contention. Last, but not least, we have opted for speedy market reforms, democracy and the integration of European countries.

This domestic state and international orientation of the Republic of Macedonia and its key role with regard to peace in the southern Balkans was supported by the United Nations through the deployment of forces of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force in the Republic of Macedonia. This helped to prevent an escalation of the war to the south of the Balkans and gave a clear signal that the independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Macedonia are also a matter of concrete interest to the United Nations. In addition, under the aegis of the United Nations a start was made in normalization of relations between the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Greece.

The Republic of Macedonia remains ready to take a full and active part in and to contribute fully and actively to the United Nations in the hope that, on the basis of the Charter, we shall finally secure the right to have the Organization refer to us by our constitutional name — the Republic of Macedonia — and that we shall receive active support in surmounting the damage caused by sanctions and blockades.

9. The Slovak Republic

Address by
H.E. Mr. Michal Kováč, President

[*Delivered in Slovak; English text provided by the delegation*]

It is my great pleasure to address this most distinguished assembly of representatives of the States Members of the United Nations, as well as leading representatives of this world Organization. I am convinced that the festive moments we are now sharing during the fiftieth session of the United Nations General Assembly will mark the beginning of a new era in our purposeful and responsible approach to the future evolution of the international community.

Slovakia is one of the youngest Members of the United Nations. At the same time, as a part of the former Czechoslovakia, it shares the traditions as one of the founders of the United Nations. For our country, the United Nations is the most important world organization and has been playing an irreplaceable role in international relations for half a century. We are proud that Slovak diplomats were present at its founding. Indeed, one of them was the very first Legal Counsel of the United Nations, with the rank of Assistant Secretary-General — a distinguished Slovak jurist and diplomat, Mr. Ivan Kerno.

The United Nations was established after a failed attempt to gain absolute world hegemony and in the euphoric atmosphere of the victory over that attempt. It was founded in order to prevent a recurrence of that catastrophe and to save future generations from the suffering and horrors of war. The Slovak Republic highly appreciates both current and past endeavours of the United Nations in the field of international relations.

The United Nations is a living organism; it enjoys periods of success but is aware of its weaknesses as well. On the one hand, we can appreciate the past and present role of the Organization in resolving issues related to peace and security. On the other hand, social issues, as well as the process of strengthening democracy and protecting human rights, will require a more sensitive and, above all, a more effective approach in the future. We are currently witnessing growth in the United Nations role in the field of economic and social development, where a certain disproportion exists. The international community cannot afford, in its own interests, not to address this disproportion.

The current trend clearly reveals its common denominators to be interdependence and interconnectedness. The United Nations faces an uneasy but unavoidable task. This task requires it to resolve problems connected with changes in its institutional structure and administrative and legal mechanisms and, last but not least, connected with the adoption of measures that can lead to the more efficient functioning of the whole system and its invigoration by outstanding human potential. The United Nations can only change in line with the wishes and desires of its Members. If we want these structural changes to have a positive impact on the international situation, the political will and agreement of our individual Governments are of vital importance.

The United Nations has a relatively short but very dynamic history. Even during its brief existence it has made many demonstrable contributions to the well-being of mankind. However, voices can be heard today expressing pessimism about the future of our Organization. We prefer to believe that this Organization is ensuring its continued viability through its actions. Let me refer to a Slovak proverb:

"If you do nothing you cannot make a mistake."

In this respect, the willingness and ability of the United Nations to assume and continue to accept its burden of great responsibility deserve our highest appreciation and, especially, our ongoing willingness to participate in the fulfilment of the new and more demanding tasks before the Organization.

Slovakia is aware of its obligations towards the United Nations. Our new State has successfully taken part in many United Nations activities. Let me mention only one: our participation in peace-keeping and humanitarian operations. I wish to assure Members that my country will continue to act in conformity with its international obligations and in the general spirit of cooperation between States in the United Nations.

Allow me finally to express my sincere conviction that the United Nations, as it meets to sum up its achievements on the occasion of its golden jubilee, is fully equipped to find non-schematic and constructive solutions to even the most intricate current and future problems. Our conviction is strengthened as cooperation between us, as individual members of the international community, grows deeper and stronger. I would like to assure the Assembly that Slovakia wishes to be and will be a solid and reliable partner in this process.

10. The Republic of the Marshall Islands

Address by
H.E. Mr. Amata Kabua, President

I bring warm greetings from the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands. I extend to you, Mr. President, and to the Secretary-General, on behalf of the people of the Marshall Islands, our warmest congratulations on your leadership.

Let us recognize on this historic occasion the contribution of the founding fathers and framers of the United Nations and its Charter. Their vision has contributed to an ever-increasing consciousness of the prerequisites to world peace.

Today is an occasion to celebrate half a century of the existence of the United Nations and its accomplishments, and also to reflect over how, collectively, we may better chart our path and more clearly articulate our goals for the next 50 years or so.

There is today growing evidence of the human capacity for wider affection and loyalty, as demonstrated by increasing interdependence and integration. Yet the fomentation of conflicts and persecution continues to thrive unabated. An entrenched mind-set continues to place ethnicity and the nation-State above all else, frustrating the realization of the vision enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

The current political landscape is now vastly different from that of 50 years ago. This requires the United Nations critically to examine its performance and structures in search of practical solutions. It is imperative, therefore, that those elements which are antiquated and no longer minister to the needs of a continually changing humanity be swept away and relegated to the currents of history.

Fundamental principles governing the operation of the essential organs of the United Nations, such as the Security Council, should be given particular attention; so, too, must the International Court of Justice and the conditions which continue to restrain its effectiveness. No less important are the perennial financial constraints and conditions hampering the work of the United Nations.

This session will witness the sharing of many constructive and far-sighted recommendations. I propose the holding of an international convocation before the turn of the century. With firm resolve and clear vision, we must endeavour to make the cause of peace the object of our consultations and seek by every means in our power to establish the unity of all the nations. These consultations should lead to the formulation of binding agreements, treaties and covenants, the provisions of which should be inviolable and definite.

Humanity's yearning for peace has already created an impetus, the gathering momentum of which, despite temporary setbacks, cannot be restrained from achieving its ultimate goal. It is in the spirit of this momentum that we in the Marshall Islands find it most difficult to understand the need for and the wisdom underlying the resumption of nuclear tests in the Pacific.

Often heard in this Hall is the resounding siren which calls for the practical application of universal democratic principles. Accordingly, what other act could be more befitting and courageous on the part of the United Nations than to bring about in its own Charter those fundamental changes that will ensure the full exercise of those same principles?

These changes must be carried out with soul-searching deliberation in order to ensure the strengthening of an institution whose foundation must be unshakeably firm. Predicated on humanity's yearning for a future that bears the promise of peace and prosperity, our duty is to devise the most acceptable solutions borne of our deepest convictions and shared vision.

The United Nations constitutes the most legitimate forum through which the interests and concerns of individual nations can be expressed, and their fears allayed. We are therefore charged with an immense responsibility to develop ways and means to enable the citizens of the world fully to enjoy the benefits and prosperity of universal peace.

It is with this in mind that I feel moved to urge that the perennial rhetoric must cease. The United Nations must become a truly international governing body and assume the reins of administering those affairs which affect all nations and which are best managed at the collective and at the global level.

The transition we are witnessing is not an oscillation, nor a fluctuation, nor even a temporary shift in the affairs of humanity in which normalcy will eventually be restored after a short while. It is a global transition, irreversible in its forward momentum and firm in its purpose. We must therefore recognize the futility of insisting upon the preservation of the sanctity of the status quo in the face of these inevitable global changes. Failure to do so would perpetuate the existence of an order which is lamentably defective in its capacity to meet the requirements of a world in transition. Change must take place. Our noble task, therefore, is to effect the necessary transformation in the patterns of the prevailing order so as to be able to cause the efflorescence of the goal of a global society. The status quo can no longer remain sacrosanct. It is no longer manageable. It has got to be changed.

The building of a strong foundation based on shared values, exemplified by the founding fathers of the United Nations 50 years ago, must remain our unshakeable purpose. But our determination and resolve must be

strengthened, and must be imaginative beyond all past records so that entrenched barriers are removed and the basis for laying down the foundation of an unassailable new world order is assured permanently.

May God bless the United Nations.

11. The Gabonese Republic

Address by
H.E. El Hadj Omar Bongo, President

[Delivered in French]

We are met here today to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter in San Francisco on 26 June 1945. The United Nations system is the object of much criticism by international public opinion. Some say that the United Nations is merely a forum in which to make speeches. Others say that it is an ineffective organization.

Though such comments are often excessive, they nevertheless reflect the disarray that afflicts the international community in the face of certain tragic situations. The record of our Organization over half a century enables us, however, to draw some lessons from the experience we have acquired. Thus, we should together define new undertakings that will help us to ensure the achievement of the purposes set forth in the Charter.

As we contemplate those purposes 50 years later, what is the situation of our Organization, when we judge by the pictures of the terrible events that we see, the persistence of local and regional conflicts in Bosnia, Cyprus, Somalia, Liberia, Rwanda, Burundi and the Middle East, to mention only those; or if we judge from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, a daily menace to international peace and security?

If we look at the underdevelopment that persists today, with its train of evils, some might be tempted to say that the United Nations has not played a positive role worthy to go down in history.

However, despite the inadequacies that can be listed, many of which can be attributed to the East-West confrontation, the United Nations has none the less shown that it is indispensable. It has shown, moreover, that it remains a centre for the harmonization of the actions of nations in the attainment of the great ideals enshrined in the San Francisco Charter.

Indeed, the United Nations can take credit above all for ensuring respect for human rights by combatting racism and all forms of discrimination. It has also contributed greatly to democratization, which is under way in many countries.

However, while it is legitimate to draw satisfaction from the progress made, we must recognize that this could have been considerably greater. To that end, in our quest for peace, we should have shown greater imagination and realism. Instead, we remained content too often with attitudes that assuaged our consciences without resolving the problems. And yet, we all know that efforts for peace and development depend on us, and only on us, and we also know that we can bring about peace and achieve development if we all want to do so together.

I say "together" because the challenges to be faced on the eve of the third millennium are so complex and so numerous, and often cut across national boundaries. Thus, without international cooperation and active political will, it would be virtually impossible for any country acting alone, powerful though it might be, to bring about an effective and definitive response.

Undoubtedly, in the course of these years the United Nations has made remarkable efforts and set in motion vast programmes: the struggle against the illicit trafficking of drugs and international terrorism, and the fight against under-development; and the campaign against acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and other diseases. Unfortunately, the results achieved so far have not satisfied our hopes and the expectations of our peoples.

We must therefore commit ourselves even more to pool our resources in order to remove from the world all the ills that beset us and to build the peaceful world of which the framers of the Charter dreamed. From that viewpoint, we need a stronger Organization, one capable of responding to the needs of the hour and preventing future dangers. The United Nations Charter has given us the means. Let us adopt those means in keeping with the times, and let us take action.

The far-reaching changes of recent years have considerably influenced the course of international life. The time has come to revisit the practices of the United Nations in order to bring them into line with the new context. In this process, the Security Council, the principal organ for the maintenance of peace, should be reformed in order to embrace the present dimensions of our Organization.

These are a few reflections to which, I believe, we must apply rapid responses if we wish the United Nations truly to serve the interests of mankind as a whole.

Many studies with a view to revitalizing the United Nations have been published in recent years. Let us bring them together and draw from them any lessons that might enable our Organization to enhance its effectiveness. And since an intergovernmental working group has just been established in order to explore those ideas, let us accelerate its conclusions so that we can take the necessary decisions.

For the time being, let us strengthen those mechanisms that have been tried, proved and unanimously accepted in our common struggle for peace and economic and social progress.

With regard to the maintenance of peace and the settlement of conflicts, the United Nations should, in most cases, encourage resort to peaceful means. These means, which include dialogue, negotiation and mutual respect, in the end always demonstrate their effectiveness. Very often they prevail over the use of force.

Unfortunately, these means are not always effective. Resort to force then becomes indispensable. In those cases, let us do so in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter and, if possible, in cooperation with other regional political or military organizations from the areas where conflict has broken out.

In order to carry out all of these activities, the United Nations needs financial means. We must provide these through the contributions of States. Without them, our Organization would be like an automobile without fuel.

The struggle for peace, especially now, is a struggle for development. The absence of economic development today is as much of a threat to peace and security as is military confrontation. The picture as we see it today is far from encouraging. Indeed, it is a source of deep concern. Resources earmarked for development are dwindling in a disturbing way instead of increasing. This poses a threat to emerging democracies and a danger especially for Africa. Our deliberations should seriously address that issue.

At this stage, I should like to express the wish that relations between countries of the North and those of the South will be characterized by greater solidarity and understanding.

I wish to propose that a real dialogue, a permanent dialogue, be established, under the auspices of the United Nations, between Heads of State and Government of the South and those of the North. In that way, we may be able to find solutions to our common problems. The recent meetings held under the auspices of the United Nations, such as the Rio Summit on the environment, the Copenhagen Summit on Social Development and the recent meeting on women's issues in Beijing, provide platforms replete with useful proposals. We should be able to put these to use in order to give our Organization the new impetus it will need as it celebrates its fiftieth anniversary.

12. The United Mexican States

Address by
H.E. Mr. Ernesto Zedillo, President

[*Delivered in Spanish*]

I am attending this ceremony to express Mexico's pleasure at seeing the General Assembly celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

For reasons of history and conviction, Mexico was among the founders of the United Nations. Since then, it has actively contributed its diplomacy and its vote to the achievement by the Organization of a membership of 185, which confers upon it universal representation.

Mexico recognizes that for half a century the United Nations has been contributing decisively to avoiding a global conflagration and to promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes.

In today's world, serious problems persist which are at the root of conflicts that in the past gave rise to confrontations; globalization and interdependence coexist alongside trends towards isolationism and intolerance. Restrictive nationalism, attempts at genocide and fragmentation, environmental deterioration and drug trafficking, economic disparities, social inequality and poverty are the current threats to peace and security.

For this reason, the principles underlying and the *raison d'être* of the birth of the United Nations are today still fully valid. Also for this reason, we must strengthen the United Nations as the principal universal forum for dialogue and peace, for security and cooperation between peoples, and for ensuring that the relations among States are governed by international law.

The United Nations must be the forum for achieving a world free of nuclear threat. Along with the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean, Mexico has established a vast region free of nuclear weapons. Mexico urges the international community to continue working to conclude a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty.

The United Nations must actively promote a comprehensive strategy against drug trafficking. It must work towards ensuring that the countries that account for the bulk of the demand for narcotics do their fair share in fighting this illicit trafficking.

The United Nations can and should participate more vigorously in creating a culture of responsibility towards the environment and in cooperating to preserve the rich diversity of our planet.

The United Nations constitutes a particularly useful forum for promoting respect for human rights and the culture of indigenous communities, for spreading democracy and justice, and for curbing all forms of racism, xenophobia and exclusion. The United Nations must contribute with much greater creativity and resolve towards promoting development and combating poverty and towards ensuring the observance of the rights of women and of the disabled. The United Nations must contribute to enabling all peoples to benefit from the opportunities offered by the world economy.

International peace and security must be founded on development and equity. Peace is inseparable from development, and security is inseparable from prosperity. By sowing the seeds of development, we shall reap peace.

In those purposes lies the relevance of the United Nations; they renew and enhance the tasks of the Organization, and they give its mission permanence and vitality. To strengthen the fulfilment of this mission, Mexico favours a reform of the United Nations system. Mexico will work for a reform that is respectful of the purposes and principles that gave birth to the Organization, a reform that ensures a more democratic, transparent and efficient system, better equipped to forge a future of peace.

Mexico reiterates its confidence in the United Nations as the forum that most fully represents the diversity of mankind and the plurality of nations, and reaffirms that it will continue to work with our Organization for peace and for the progress of all peoples.

13. Turkmenistan

Address by
H.E. Mr. Saparmurat Niyazov, President

[*Delivered in Russian*]

As I address the General Assembly on behalf of the independent State of Turkmenistan for the first time, I would like at the outset to congratulate all of you, Your Excellencies, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the world's highest forum.

Since declaring its independence, and since becoming a Member of the United Nations on 2 March 1992, Turkmenistan has been able to participate independently in the affairs of the world community at a time when a new world model is being shaped. The twentieth-century ideological confrontation between blocs is gone, and mankind must choose which way to go. Turkmenistan has made its choice on the basis of principle, by declaring its firm adherence to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. We stand together with those who believe in the philosophy of uniting the world while recognizing the differences that exist; we stand together with those who recognize the primacy of the United Nations in devising programmes of civilized partnership free from diktat and the imposition of ideas and ways of life.

Turkmenistan supports efforts to improve the United Nations and its structures. The world has changed, and so have the conditions under which States exist. This must be reflected also in the work of the United Nations. We agree that it is necessary to enlarge the Security Council so that it adequately represents the interests of all States and regions. Striving for the creation of a new, civilized world order must involve the democratization of the decision-making mechanism and the participation of all States in this process.

The new non-polar world is a community of equal partners, where countries are not divided into the small and the large, the central and the peripheral. There should be no elite countries with special powers and prerogatives that rightfully belong to the entire world community. Such an approach would enhance responsibility for the implementation of United Nations decisions and for their effective fulfilment; this is the main issue on the agenda of the General Assembly at its current session.

This problem is relevant because, unfortunately, optimistic expectations that the end of the cold war would make the world a safer place have not materialized. The new realities have not solved the old problems, and the emergence of independent States has given birth to new conflicts in various regions of the globe.

We are painfully aware of their effects in our part of the world, in Asia. Given its enormous human potential coupled with its natural and intellectual resources, our continent has every possibility to become the richest and most prosperous region in the world. Unfortunately, instability and long-standing regional conflicts have become a permanent political backdrop in Asia, which considerably hinders the resolution of matters relating to domestic development. Therefore there is a strong need for that continent to consider such vitally important issues as the creation of a more just and equitable order in the areas of the economy, information and cultural exchanges. Of no less importance is the task of halting attempts to form political blocs on the basis of linguistic, religious or geographic commonality.

Accordingly, Turkmenistan has embarked upon the road of seizing this historic opportunity for independent development; after all, the last Turkmen State existed eight centuries ago. The Turkmen nation is the successor of the world's most ancient civilizations, such as those of the Parthians, the Seljuks and others. During their centuries-old history, replete with drama, triumph and tragedy, the Turkmen people accumulated a powerful spiritual potential while preserving their national identity. Basing ourselves on this historical foundation and on recent experience, we have managed to preserve social stability in this crucial period.

Within a short time we have developed and implemented programmes of national State-building and have established links with the rest of the world. The model of our statehood is consonant with the national character and traditions of the Turkmen people and reflects universal human principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. We harmonize each step that we take, on the one hand, with the national interests of Turkmenistan and, on the other, with the requirements of regional stability and the strengthening of international security. Furthermore, we are becoming increasingly convinced that the former is inseparable from the latter.

This has particular importance for us: Turkmenistan is located at a major world crossroads; it has more than a quarter of the world's deposits of hydrocarbons and it ranks fourth in natural gas reserves. This clearly underscores that our policy of neutrality is correct and will meet the interests of international cooperation, bearing in mind Turkmenistan's geographical location. It is from this that we draw the logic of Turkmenistan's policy of constructive neutrality; we appeal to this high forum of Heads of State or Government for support for our initiative.

We are ready to cooperate fully with all so that our potential is used for common good on the basis of equal partnership and mutual benefit. It is destiny's choice that in terms of international relations Turkmenistan should be a part of both Europe and Asia. In this context, we fully share the view of the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, that new connecting roads should go through Turkmenistan and its neighbouring countries and that a transcontinental link between Europe and Asia should be built.

This thought is consonant with our firm belief that there is today a new region, formed of the States of Central Asia, the Middle East, South-West Asia, parts of the Caucasus and the Near East. Many countries of this region have become members of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), which aims at developing active partnership between regions, particularly with the Association of South-East Asian Nations and the European Union. Next year Turkmenistan will assume the presidency of the ECO and will spare no effort to promote those beneficial processes. In this context, we highly appreciate the initiative of France to host the first summit of Heads of State of Europe and Asia in spring next year.

Turkmenistan pursues a policy of permanent positive neutrality, strictly adhering in practice to the rules of international conduct incumbent upon a neutral State. In this connection I would like to thank the Secretary-General and the Heads of State or Government who have backed our initiative both at the bilateral level and within the framework of the current session of the General Assembly. I would like to express gratitude to the States members of the Non-Aligned Movement that unanimously voiced their support for Turkmenistan's policy of neutrality at their eleventh summit, recently held at Cartagena. We are grateful to States members of the ECO and to our neighbours for their understanding of our good intentions and objectives. Neutral Turkmenistan is ready to promote United Nations goals in implementing its programme of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping and peace-building. We recognize that the status of neutrality implies not only rights but also responsibilities, which we fully undertake and are ready to fulfil in accordance with the principles of the United Nations.

For centuries, Turkmenistan was known for its unique Akhalteke horses, its wonderful carpets and its natural resources. Today it is striving to be known in the world for its political position. Magtimguly, a Turkmen classical writer and philosopher, once said, "There is no need for words of irritation or spite; my nation does not accept any spite". Those words, spoken two centuries ago, have acquired new meaning today. Independent, democratic and neutral Turkmenistan will take part in common endeavours towards the achievement of goodness, fairness and humanism, and towards the triumph of the ideals of the United Nations.

14. The Republic of Latvia

Address by
H.E. Mr. Guntis Ulmanis, President

[*Delivered in Latvian; English text provided by the delegation*]

I congratulate the United Nations on its golden anniversary. It is my wish that our work may be harmonious and productive during this period of celebration, remembrance and appraisal.

The peoples of the United Nations, in establishing the Organization, were determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. This end was sought at a time when hope and idealism prevailed in the international community.

Latvia should have been one of the original signatories of the Charter of the United Nations, but was not because it was under occupation at that time. However, the United Nations message of freedom and equality helped to sustain hope in Latvia during the long years of occupation. For their part, Latvians and their Baltic brethren in exile turned to the United Nations, seeking to return the Baltic States to the community of nations. Today, as a Member State of the United Nations, Latvia participates in efforts to improve the Organization.

Much has been achieved during the existence of the United Nations. Peace and reconciliation have been made possible through preventive diplomacy and peace-keeping under United Nations auspices. Humanitarian assistance has been brought to crisis points around the world, ensuring survival and shelter for millions of people. The Organization has been a forum in which initiatives vitally important for humanity have been launched.

The end of the cold war has given us an opportunity to fulfil the vision of the founders of the United Nations: the creation of a global order in which the principles of the Charter are respected and its purposes are achieved. Still, the present situation in the world evokes historical analogies with the era in which the League of Nations assumed responsibility for collective security. A generation of Latvians still alive today clearly recalls the results of aggression and its appeasement in 1939. I say this with full accountability, because I know the road to Calvary that has been travelled by Latvia and its people.

Since its establishment, the United Nations has sought to meet the various challenges to international peace and security. Threats in the modern era differ from those that existed prior to the Second World War. Conflict avoidance mechanisms such as preventive diplomacy and other confidence-building measures have become fundamental for the maintenance of international peace and security. Modern threats challenge States and people indiscriminately. No one is immune to the effects of transnational crime, terrorism and trafficking in narcotics and nuclear materials. These problems do not respect national boundaries; States and societies cannot solve them individually. Indeed, interdependence benefits each State individually and sustains the whole.

The watchword for this session is "reform". Latvia actively participates in the efforts to reform and strengthen the United Nations System, in order that it may more effectively serve the peoples of our planet. The changes and uncertainty in the world will determine the nature of reform.

The operation of the Security Council must continue to become more transparent and open, while preserving the Council's effectiveness. Its expansion must increase the role of small countries, respect the principle of equitable geographical distribution and take into account the new geopolitical realities of the post-cold-war era.

Reforms to improve the financial situation of the United Nations must be two-pronged: innovative financing mechanisms must be developed and the existing assessment mechanism must be corrected to reflect fully the principle of sovereign equality. Reforms must address the obstacles that prevent many Member States from meeting their assessments in full and on time.

World conferences in Vienna, Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing have adopted Declarations and Programmes of Action the implementation of which is dependent on the resolve of States. In accordance with the recommendations of the World Conference on Human Rights, Latvia has established an independent State Human Rights Office. An important and constructive role in its establishment was played by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and its office in Latvia.

The survival of humanity is unimaginable without serious measures to protect our environment. To this end, Latvia is seeking to hold, at the dawn of the new century, an international conference on disarmament and its relationship to the environment and to development.

Every task is achievable, if only States have the necessary determination and will. Rainis, the Latvian poet and Nobel Prize nominee, has said: "That which transforms, will survive." Thus, the United Nations must change, so that our aspirations for the next century may come to fruition.

15. Ireland

Address by
H.E. Mrs. Mary Robinson, President

The 51 States that founded this Organization in 1945 wrought well. The United Nations has become the first universal organization of States in human history; and it has shaped the whole structure of international relations through the second half of the twentieth century.

But our Special Commemorative Meeting will be an empty ritual, quickly forgotten, if we limit ourselves to congratulation. This is a time to adapt and renew what we have inherited; a time for vision, equal now to that of half a century ago; above all a time for Member States to make a new commitment and carry it through in action.

We are close to the end of a century and near to the opening of a new millennium. Was there ever a time of such possibility? Was there ever a time for such concern? Humankind now holds the fate of all other species in its hands; it fills the planet; it owns the Earth.

How shall we organize ourselves to meet this awesome responsibility? Human nature will not change, but throughout history, humanity has also shown a deep capacity for compassion and for solidarity — initially to family, and then to wider kin, to clan, to tribe, to city and to nation. Can we now learn to extend our solidarity and compassion to the whole human family in all its rich diversity; and beyond it, to all other life on the planet, which is now ours to conserve or to destroy? Fragile and transient we may be as individuals but we are stewards for all the life we know and for the Earth which bears it.

Those of us who exercise leadership of nations at this time will have to understand and accept this enormous responsibility. We live in a world of sovereign States: a world where conflict is a constant danger and weapons grow endlessly in power; a world where States on occasion collapse in anarchy and where the passion and fear aroused in ethnic conflict can lead to genocide. It is a world where problems of ecology and climate and resources are global; where population grows; where poverty, hunger and injustice oppress millions of people.

This is our world in the late twentieth century. At the centre we need an effective universal Organization which will address global problems in the common interest; which will avert or end war; advance human rights;

establish a rule of law based on justice between States; mobilize the human capacity for compassion and solidarity to help the disadvantaged; protect the defenceless; and promote human freedom and potential.

We have such an Organization in place and we can adapt and develop it. But let us be honest and speak plainly.

Today, on its fiftieth birthday, the United Nations is in crisis. The whole future of the United Nations as an effective global Organization is in question. Its authority is uncertain, its financial situation dire. Its Member States give it tasks which exceed its present capacity. They stint and limit their support and then blame it for lack of success in enterprises which their own lack of support has doomed to failure.

I have just come back from a visit to Rwanda and I know at first hand the tragic consequences which this can have. If we do not act together soon to change this, if we do not infuse the United Nations and the family of organizations which has grown around it with a new sense of purpose and a new sense of direction — a genuine global ethic — then I fear that the praise we give to the United Nations from this rostrum over these days will come in time to be read as its epitaph.

It is the view of the Irish Government that four steps could be taken in this year to transform the situation and infuse the United Nations with new vigour.

First must be finance. The United Nations is grinding to a halt for lack of it. Just imagine if each of us who comes to this rostrum were to limit what we say to 16 words: my Government has met all its assessed contributions in full — we have paid what we owe. What an impact that would have, what an anniversary gift for the Organization! Later perhaps we might begin to study various proposals which have been made for other, more autonomous means of financing the United Nations and its agencies. Of course, one accepts that there is room for greater efficiency in the United Nations as in many large public-service organizations throughout the world. But this can in no way excuse the failure to pay contributions.

Secondly, the Security Council, in conjunction with the Secretary-General and drawing on his advice, should examine, clarify and codify its procedures for undertaking and running peace-keeping operations and enforcement action. To restore its authority it must ensure that the decisions it takes and the mandates it gives are clear and that there will be both a determination and a capacity on the part of all concerned to carry them through.

Thirdly, it is time to consider seriously how to ensure that in the early stages of a crisis, when a peace-keeping operation is urgently needed and when it may be most effective, the United Nations will be in a position to respond. We should consider what more can be done to provide stand-by units — military and police. For example, is it not possible to think about proposals which have been made for a modest international volunteer force at the disposal of the Secretary-General under the direction of the Security Council?

Fourthly, it is time now to take decisions on the enlargement of the Council to make it more representative and thereby increase its authority.

These steps, in the view of the Irish Government, would be a beginning. It is a modest programme; it is feasible and realistic and it would give us confidence for the many further changes which will be necessary to strengthen the authority and the capacity of the United Nations and fit it to address the problems of the new millennium.

16. The Kingdom of the Netherlands

Address by
H.E. Mr. Wim Kok, Prime Minister and Minister
for General Affairs

First of all, I would like to join those who have already paid tribute to the United Nations on its fiftieth anniversary.

This Commemorative Meeting is a good opportunity to reflect on both the achievements and the shortcomings of the United Nations.

We have to ask ourselves why, after 50 years, so few of the original ideals laid down in the Charter have been fully realized. When doing this, we have to be aware that we, the Member States, play a crucial role in every success or failure of the United Nations.

The main task before us is to come to grips with reality. We must determine what it is that we want from the United Nations and how much we are willing to pay, politically and financially, in order to let the Organization do its work.

We are well aware of the fact that the Organization is facing huge problems reconciling the tasks it is supposed to carry out with the means its Member States are willing to provide. Indeed, in the last few years, the international community has enthusiastically made demands on the United Nations on an ever-increasing scale but without showing a similar degree of enthusiasm in providing the necessary financial means.

The Member States must learn to be more realistic in what they ask of the United Nations. To that end, we need agreement on the core functions of the United Nations, we need a realistic assessment of the capabilities of the United Nations to perform these core functions, we need agreement on a division of labour within the Organization as well as with other international organizations, we need recognition of the fact that in order to be relevant the United Nations needs a more result-oriented approach and we need to bring the debate on reforming the United Nations to a concrete end so that the United Nations can adapt to new realities and new challenges.

The Netherlands strongly supports multilateralism. We need the United Nations: there is no alternative. We still adhere to the tasks described in the Charter: the maintenance of peace and security, the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and respect for the rule of international law. But we are facing immense new challenges as well, such as the problems related to the environment and sustainable development, overpopulation, intra-State conflicts, drugs and terrorism.

I agree with the agenda as described this morning by President Clinton to intensify our efforts in the fight against international organized crime in all its aspects.

We welcome the establishment of the Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System. The Netherlands is willing to seek support for this approach and work with other Member States towards practical solutions. I would like to see the process of reform culminating in concrete decisions to be taken ultimately in 1998.

Structure and working methods have to be modernized. The United Nations needs a more efficient and effective management avoiding duplication and overlap. The Swedish Prime Minister, Mr. Ingvar Carlsson, has taken the initiative to instal a group of Heads of State or Government that will try to actively guide the process of reform of the United Nations. The Netherlands is happy to take part in this initiative and will support any action that will give an impetus to the dynamics of the process of reform and renewal. The Heads of State or Government are getting together tomorrow morning in order to discuss how to proceed further.

The current cash-flow crisis of the Organization is extremely serious. If no action is taken, the United Nations will run out of cash some time next year. I should like to emphasize that all Member States have to honour their obligation under the Charter and under international law to pay their contributions to the United Nations in full, on time and without conditions. This is a *sine qua non* on which the very existence of the United Nations is based.

To sum up, we cannot do without a strong United Nations. Much of what the United Nations has accomplished over the past 50 years is too useful and too precious to give up, but we have to show a sense of urgency in our efforts to prepare the Organization for the its important work in the twenty-first century.

17. Saint Lucia

Address by
H.E. The Right Honourable John G. M. Compton, Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Planning and Development

On this the fiftieth anniversary of its founding, my country shares the sense of achievement of Member States of the United Nations that our efforts have rewarded the hopes of the founding fathers that the Organization should save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. It was also the express wish that the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small should be respected and protected.

In many ways, the Member States of the United Nations have embraced the four freedoms of the Atlantic Charter and tried to elevate them to universal truths. I refer to freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship or conscience, freedom from want and freedom from fear.

We have struggled over the past half-century to attain these ideals, but in our human imperfections we have fallen short of full glory. Somehow, Nirvana has eluded us. We have to admit that the idealism of the 1940s seems to have lapsed into the materialism of the 1990s. The underlying sense of equity and justice which informed the original Charter is somewhat overshadowed by events in the global village today. In the theatre of war, that sense of exhilaration and deeper humanity which came in the wake of the horrors of Belsen and Auschwitz seems to have slipped back into the double focus of the atrocities of Bosnia and the genocide of Rwanda.

At the level of trade and development we have seen a systematic reduction in foreign aid and aggressive competition, and even those institutions such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the International Development Agency, which were created specifically to help the wretched of the Earth, are either starved of support or threatened with extinction. The dream has dimmed, but not completely faded. We must all redouble our efforts to ensure that the Charter's vibrant call for equal rights, with its comforting implication of racial harmony, is not mocked by the xenophobia which threatens Western society today.

However, in spite of these developments, which seem to have violated the idealism of the founding fathers, the Organization has much cause for celebration. Its many organs and agencies, which work quietly and efficiently away from the glare of the media, have many achievements to their credit.

They are engaged in silent battles against man's ancient enemies of ignorance, poverty and disease. They have kept the peace in many parts of the world without the fanfare of international commendation. They have registered remarkable successes in freeing subject-peoples from the yoke of colonial domination.

In recent weeks we have seen the other half of humanity, some would say the better half, the women of the world, emerge from the shadows of neglect seeking to shed the effects of centuries of discrimination. They took to the world stage, seriously and purposefully, at the United Nations-sponsored Conference at Beijing. Their powerful voices demanded to be recognized as what creation intended them to be, the helpmates and equal partners of men. Such triumphs demand not only observation on our fiftieth anniversary, but celebration as well.

I should like to congratulate the President and his country for his elevation to the presidency of this time-honoured body. May I further express my country's empathy with the programmes and policies espoused by our Secretary-General Mr. Boutros-Ghali. But most of all, let me pay tribute to all the Member countries of the United Nations which have fought so valiantly in the past 50 years to preserve the spirit of San Francisco.

We have scored many remarkable victories in South Africa, in Haiti and more tentatively, in the Middle East. We must now face squarely the convoluted problems of Africa. We must support the brave initiative of Latin America and the Caribbean to forge an impressive Association of Caribbean States. These exciting initiatives undertaken by the countries of the Caribbean Basin cut clear across the barriers of race, language and culture. They embrace vast countries as well as small islands, and it is our fervent hope that this Association will be the microcosm of the United Nations in search of peace, justice and equality.

The lofty ideals which brought us together must be recaptured. We must avoid the debilitating and demoralizing effects of materialism and make an effort to recapture the spirit of San Francisco.

Looking back, we are reminded of the haunting words of the poem *Desiderata*, which says:

"With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams
It is still a beautiful world."

Let us all strive to make it even more beautiful in the twenty-first century.

18. The Principality of Liechtenstein

Address by
H.E. Mr. Mario Frick, Prime Minister

This Commemorative Meeting is a very solemn event, doing justice to the impressive history of the United Nations and to its unique role in today's world, and I am honoured to add Liechtenstein's voice to the celebrations. In view of the limited time at our disposal, we have to focus on those issues which appear to be of particular importance, but I attach great importance to emphasizing that other topics, which I will not be able to mention today, deserve the same attention and our most careful consideration.

Liechtenstein joined the United Nations only five years ago, but we had long benefited from the Organization's achievements. The United Nations has defined international human-rights standards and has laid the foundation for the international promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The United Nations system has strengthened and expanded international law, and it has promoted the recognition of the human rights of women as well as the active participation of women in all sectors of society.

Today we are looking back at 50 years of the existence of the United Nations, which are rich in events, turning-points and changes. Above all, however, it is our duty to look forward and, drawing from the experience we have acquired in half a century, to strengthen the capacities and the effectiveness of the United Nations, which today, more than ever, is faced with numerous, enormous tasks.

New problems and new challenges call for new, creative and flexible approaches. No one can deny that the United Nations today is not always able to respond swiftly and effectively to sometimes rapidly changing situations or, as would be most desirable, to become active in a preventive manner.

A comprehensive reform and restructuring of the United Nations system is necessary to achieve this goal and we are therefore pleased that all Member States have agreed to make serious and coordinated efforts in this respect. The reform of the Security Council, the Agenda for Peace and the Agenda for Development constitute crucial elements in this process. But we have to realize that no reform, however artful it may be, can be successful unless we are able to finally provide the Organization with a sound financial base. We are, in this context, especially concerned about the endangering of peace-keeping operations. It is unacceptable that the United Nations, while at the centre of the attention and expectations of people, should find itself continuously grappling with serious financial problems. Various measures can be useful in working towards this goal, and several promising proposals have been made in this respect including the improved use of available resources. The most important requirement, however, remains that we all pay fully and on time the contributions which we are obliged to pay under the Charter of the United Nations.

In recent years, United Nations activities have been marked by radical changes on the global political map, a considerable increase in the membership of the Organization and the holding of several major conferences in different fields. Those conferences have made very clear the extent to which the major issues of concern to the United Nations are interdependent, and we agree with those who believe that we should now focus our efforts on the implementation of the respective outcomes of those conferences.

While the future structure and work of the United Nations will have to be shaped and elaborated through the careful efforts and negotiations of our delegations, we can, at this Commemorative Meeting, send a strong message by making very clear that we remain genuinely committed to the purposes and principles of this Organization and that we are willing to do everything possible to achieve those purposes. Whatever changes and challenges the future may bring, the effectiveness of the work of the United Nations will always depend on the political will of its Members, and subsequent credibility in the eyes of the peoples that we represent.

19. Canada

Address by
H.E. The Right Honourable Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister

[Delivered in French]

For 50 years now the United Nations has symbolized Canada's best hopes for a world at peace. I believe there is a simple reason for this commitment. The United Nations stands for the rule of law, for social and political justice and for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

These are important principles for Canadians. They are at the heart of our identity. For although Canadians sometimes forget it, the highest hope of the global community is to achieve what we in Canada have achieved for ourselves: a means of living together in peace and understanding. While we do not have an answer to every problem, we do have the means to pursue these answers together — with respect, tolerance, accommodation and compromise.

[Continued in English]

Through 50 years the United Nations has struggled against racism and colonialism, against disease and illiteracy. It has stood up for those who have no voice — the oppressed, and millions of women and children around the world. It has contained many conflicts and brought relief to their victims. But the work is far from finished. Peace remains elusive for millions around the world. The rights of nations and the rights of individuals under international law must still be defended. The gap between rich and poor countries is far too wide. The right balance between economic development and a healthy environment must be established.

We have so much to do. But now the United Nations itself is under attack. We see it in the financial crisis. Too many States do not pay their dues on time and in full. But finances are only a symptom of a deeper crisis, a growing belief that nations cannot work together effectively on issues of common concern.

Some argue that global approaches are too complex. Others say that the United Nations is too expensive, and not worth the cost. These arguments betray a lack of confidence in the future, and Canada will have none of it.

Today, even more than 50 years ago, it is truly one world. More than ever we need the United Nations. We need it to maintain international stability and order. We need it to tackle problems that do not respect borders — AIDS, drugs, terrorism. We can make the United Nations better. Countries which can pay their dues should, now. We can reform the scale of assessments to reflect current economic realities and should without delay.

[*Continued in French*]

Tne Security Council can be more representative and can improve its transparency, its consultations and its mandates for peace-keeping. Improvements are under way. Let us finish the job.

We can react more quickly to crises. Canada has submitted a study on ways to improve the rapid deployment of military and civilian United Nations personnel. We are encouraged that the United Nations is studying these proposals seriously. We can review the mandates of the specialized agencies and make sure that they are dealing with the right issues in the right way.

The Secretary-General is working to cut waste and find efficiencies throughout the United Nations. We are each doing this in our own countries. We should do no less for the United Nations.

Fifty years ago, in the ashes of a world war, in the shadow of 50 million dead, our predecessors found the strength to believe in a better future, and the courage and the determination to build one. The result was the establishment of the United Nations. Surely we, the leaders of 1995, should do no less.

[*Continued in English*]

I pledge to the Assembly that Canada is committed to that task. Canadians believe in the future. Without that deep, unyielding belief we would not have built the country that the United Nations has named the best country in the world in which to live. That unshakeable belief is what we brought to the first 50 years of the United Nations. It is what we commit to the next 50 years.

20. The Islamic Republic of Iran

Address by
H.E. Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, Minister for Foreign Affairs
and Special Envoy of the President

[*Delivered in Persian; interpretation provided by the delegation*]

The United Nations signifies the culmination of the perennial aspirations of humanity to eschew war and conflict and to foster development, mutual respect, peace, understanding and cooperation between all peoples of the world. It was born in the aftermath of two of the most devastating wars in all human history, emanating from Europe and engulfing the globe. From the ashes of war rose a new structure that assumed the responsibility of ensuring peace and security in the world. Principles drawn up in the Charter of the United Nations became the cornerstone of international law for the resolution of disputes and the promotion of peaceful solutions to conflicts.

In retrospect, the wisdom of the underlying principles of the United Nations is vividly clear. Indeed, what has united us in this world body is our collective embrace of the purposes and principles of the United Nations, so eloquently enshrined in the Charter. Adherence to and respect for these principles will thus undoubtedly strengthen the Organization and enhance its role, while any attempt to evade the responsibilities that we have all undertaken under this covenant, however appealing and convenient it might appear in the short term to do so, will sow the seeds of its gradual disintegration.

The United Nations gains its uniqueness and strength from its universal character, which is even more impressive in the light of the diversity of its constituent elements and which can be maintained and enhanced only through respect for such diversity. In the prudent letter and spirit of the Charter, faith in and, thus, protection of, fundamental human rights, the dignity and worth of the human person, and equal rights of men and women cannot be divorced from respect for equality of nations, large and small.

There can therefore be no justification for any attempt to impose the will or values of a few over the rest of humanity or to enhance the perception of security of the privileged few at the expense of subjecting the rest of humanity to the nightmare of nuclear holocaust. Many of the ills of the international community stem from the diversion of precious resources from development to the arms race. Adding to an already complex problem are unilateral economic measures, ranging from protectionist policies and various forms of conditionalities to outright coercive economic measures and the United States policy of economic terrorism against independent States, as well as attempts to push aside the development agenda of the United Nations.

The efforts of the United Nations system in the area of cooperation for development, particularly those carried out by specialized agencies and programmes, have made their primary contribution by introducing ordinary people in the remotest parts of the world to the name, if not the ideals, of the United Nations. The development agenda of the United Nations should not be overshadowed by other, more glamorous subjects or undermined in the course of reform.

Indeed, the needs and aspirations of those very same people, who constitute the majority of humanity, must be the focus and foundation of any effort to revitalize, restructure and reform the Organization, whose conceptual objectives should be to render the United Nations decision-making process transparent, democratic, rule based and inclusive. This is in total contrast with the self-arrogated position of leadership of the United States, which insists on misusing its position within the Organization and, even at the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization, reserves for itself the resort to unilateral measures against the will of the United Nations.

The key to ensuring the success, continued relevance, and moral authority and legitimacy of the United Nations in the next millennium is the reinvigoration of the underlying concept of sovereign equality and its full application in all aspects of the work of the Organization. It implies, first and foremost, enhancing the role of the General Assembly as the most democratic and representative organ of the United Nations, removing institutionalized and implicit centres of privilege and influence and respecting the values of the equal constituent elements of this unique universal mosaic.

21. The Lebanese Republic

Address by
H.E. Mr. Bahige Tabbarah, Minister of Justice

[Delivered in Arabic]

Lebanon has been committed to the principles of the United Nations and to the realization of its objectives since 1945, the year in which we signed the Charter. Lebanon believes that inter-State relations must be based on mutual respect and equality of rights. It also believes in peoples' right to self-determination.

Lebanon participated in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. It strongly supported efforts to eradicate colonialism. To the world, Lebanon has given an example of tolerance and coexistence between different religions and creeds. Lebanon's belief in the principles and values on which the United Nations system was founded and its conviction that this Organization is the last resort for the weak and the oppressed have prompted us to bring to the attention of the United Nations our concerns, in the hope that our rights may be recognized and our problems may be resolved in the framework of law and international legality.

In resolution 425 (1978) the Security Council called for Israel's immediate withdrawal from the occupied Lebanese territories. It also called for the need to extend the authority of the State all the way to the internationally recognized Lebanese boundaries. Today, 17 years after the deployment of the international forces in the south, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) is still unable to carry out its mandate because of the stance of Israel which still refuses to withdraw, insists on maintaining an occupation zone in the southern part of Lebanon, continues to usurp land and detain the innocent and pursues a policy of pressure and intimidation.

We participated in the peace process in Madrid in good faith, on the basis of the Security Council resolutions. We are still determined, despite all the setbacks, that this peace we are striving for should be just and comprehensive; that it should guarantee the rights of all peoples in the region and ensure the return of the Palestinians to their homes. We have learned from history that peace which is not based on justice is bound to be temporary. We want a lasting peace for our region and for future generations.

We are truly disappointed as we put on record the inability of the United Nations to implement its resolutions with regard to Israel, while many other resolutions are implemented. With bitterness we realize that different standards are used in dealing with Member States of the Organization.

However, such disappointment and bitterness can only strengthen our belief in the principles upon which this Organization was founded. They must constitute a serious impetus that should prompt us all to provide the United Nations with the necessary support to strengthen it and make it capable of implementing the resolutions it adopts.

Proceeding from this and despite our suffering as a result of our long ordeal, despite the heavy demands of reconstruction against a backdrop of economic and social hardship, Lebanon has paid its assessed contributions to the United Nations in full. We take this opportunity of the golden anniversary of the United Nations to call upon Member States of the United Nations, and in particular the major Powers, to pay their arrears as a first step towards strengthening this Organization and reactivating it. This shall enable the United Nations to carry out its mission and achieve the consolidation of peace in various troubled regions in the world.

We do support the work of the Secretariat in the field of peacemaking and peace-keeping and consider such work to be not only one of the priorities of the Organization, but a core priority indeed.

However, we consider that the United Nations is not only a unique forum where Members can have their voices heard and their complaints addressed. It is primarily the international institution that provides assistance and support to the developing countries so that they, in turn, can build their economies and their societies, and gradually bridge the gap between the industrial and the developing countries.

World peace and understanding and respect for human rights cannot be permanent unless the economic gap between the rich and the poor countries of the world is bridged.

We realize that the challenges in that respect are great. However, we are confident that the international community can muster the necessary will-power to meet them. This can only be done by reactivating the role of this Organization as a haven for world peace and social justice.

22. The Republic of Georgia

Address by
H.E. Mr. Alexander D. Chikvaidze, Minister for Foreign Affairs

I should like to begin by extending my warmest congratulations to you, Mr. President, selected by your peers to preside over this historic session, thus acknowledging your outstanding personal and professional contribution to the international community.

Allow me also to address words of deep appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his remarkable dedication to guiding the Parliament of Man through some of its most trying times, and mapping out a more secure, peaceful and coherent world for future generations in his Agenda for Peace.

I am pleased and honoured to convey to this unique gathering the greetings of the Head of State of Georgia, Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze, as well as the gratitude of the people of Georgia to all Member States for their support of my country in one of the most dramatic moments of its long history.

Mr. Shevardnadze was strongly inclined to participate in this Commemorative Meeting, which is unique in its importance and magnitude. The charged atmosphere of parliamentary and presidential elections, however, did not allow him to leave the country and deliver his tenth statement from this rostrum. He asked me to assure the Assembly that Georgia is steadily returning to normal life. A new Constitution has been adopted, a new national currency has been introduced, and, as I just mentioned, presidential and parliamentary elections will be held on 5 November 1995. The Georgian leadership is invariably dedicated to its objectives of a successful transition to democracy, a market economy, social stability, peace at home and friendly relations abroad.

Anniversaries are a time to celebrate, but also a time to reflect. My Government strongly believes, however, that this reflection should not border on pessimism and an across-the-board negation of all the achievements of the past half-century.

If the United Nations did not exist, we would need to invent it. Now that it exists, we need to reinvent it. The United Nations is the largest and most powerful tool that can be wielded by the collective will of its Member States; yet it can only be wielded effectively if we, the Member States ourselves, are in step with the changes that have occurred in the world in the past few years.

The founding fathers of the United Nations half a century ago realized full well what kind of international landscape they had inherited after the Second World War, and built this Organization to respond to it.

Having experienced what probably amounts to the most momentous change of the twentieth century — the disappearance of the hostile confrontation of two different social systems — the political leaders of today have not undertaken anything of the sort.

It was obvious that the United Nations was the best instrument for restoring to the world a new equilibrium in place of the precarious balance of the bipolar world. For various reasons, however, the new world order which might have been is being killed in its infancy. It is being killed in the former Yugoslavia; it is being killed in Nagorno Karabakh, in Abkhazia and in South Ossetia.

In the absence of a clear strategy and fresh philosophical directions, the Organization, like any large bureaucracy, is slow to change and, similar to many other institutions of the post-war era, is struggling to find a new identity.

We believe that the new philosophy of the United Nations must give priority to the strategy of "making" peace over "keeping" peace. The United Nations is obliged to break with neutrality in favour of a mandatory implementation of the principles of the Charter with regard to those who break the peace.

There is also a need for a new method of decision-making — one that would focus on the means of implementation, rather than be excessively preoccupied with procedure and self-serving adjustable wording. We must have the courage and the will to call an aggressor an aggressor, and genocide genocide.

Precedents by which illegitimate extremist groups who have violated the United Nations Charter are invited into the negotiating process to participate as "parties" and are requested to consent to specific measures accord them the legitimacy of a "subject of international law" that they seek and devalue membership of the Organization itself.

The biggest danger, however, lies in the message that these precedents imply — that the force of arms can take precedence over the power of law. Georgia firmly believes that the global security architecture of today must encompass relations not only between but also within States. Georgia's example clearly demonstrates that the territorial integrity of a State is made up of the integrity of the lives and rights of its citizens.

Without individual rights, there are no rights of peoples or of humankind. Without individual rights, there is neither stability of States nor global order. It would be a tragedy of monumental proportions, and a lost opportunity for which succeeding generations would never forgive us, if we did not finally take advantage of the unique opening provided by history to build a secure foundation for a more stable and predictable world. This cannot be achieved by advancing security systems towards the East or the West; it can be achieved only by advancing towards securing the major achievement of this century — the elimination of global confrontation.

This will create a situation in which the United Nations is able to demonstrate the full measure of its effectiveness and, conversely, will prove to be the most appropriate and powerful tool of the international community in achieving this goal and in managing the numerous challenges that the twenty-first century holds in store.

23. Solomon Islands

Address by
H.E. The Honourable Danny Philip, Deputy Prime Minister
and Minister for Foreign Affairs

This rostrum is a symbol of the reason why we are gathered here to celebrate the last 50 years, and the challenge to move into the future without fear. Among the 50 countries that sent delegations to San Francisco in April 1945 to adopt the Charter of the United Nations were three from the Pacific region: Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines. In the plenary meetings that opened the United Nations Conference on International Organization the heads of delegations spoke of their hopes for the United Nations and outlined the positions of their Governments on the draft Charter.

General Carlos Romulo of the Philippines said:

> "We are here to fight for our lives. We are well aware that international understanding must rest on practical security and that the economic structure of the world must determine the balance between nations, but of more lasting importance is the spiritual structure .... Our aim must be tolerance, for victory can be preserved only with tolerance."

The Prime Minister of New Zealand, Peter Fraser, said:

> "The maintenance of peace is the paramount problem that confronts us. This is a moral problem and not merely a mechanical one to be solved by procedures, however carefully devised and comprehensive their nature. ... I would plead most earnestly that the members of the new Organization should seek international equity, both political and economic."

And on the same occasion Australia's Deputy Prime Minister, Francis Forde, said:

> "We take the view that peace and security must rest on economic justice and social security. ... We cannot disentangle in our minds the idea of justice from that of peace."

Half a century after representatives of our sister States in the Pacific gave voice to these ideas in San Francisco, they are as fresh as if spoken today, and more relevant than ever. Building international peace and security based upon political and economic equity, fostering universal human rights supportive of cultural diversity and integrity, protecting the environment and maintaining sustainable development — these are the ways in which we continue to fight for our lives through the United Nations. As the founders of this Organization understood, our problems are ultimately moral and spiritual in nature.

Therefore, the very work of diplomacy can be successful only in an atmosphere of tolerance.

His Holiness Pope John Paul II recently said in this Hall:

> "there is a moral logic which is built into human life and which makes possible dialogue between individuals and peoples." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 20th meeting, p. 3)*
>
> "The United Nations needs to rise more and more above the cold status of an administrative institution and become a moral centre where all the nations of the world feel at home and develop a shared awareness of being, as it were, a family of nations. ... The family is by nature a community based on mutual trust, mutual support and sincere respect." *(ibid., p. 5)*

In the course of the last five decades this Organization did much to expand and strengthen the community of nations. In the Pacific, for example, the United Nations has been a critical factor in the emergence of independent States. The recent international recognition of the vulnerability of small island developing States to adverse economic conditions, as well as to natural and environmental disasters, is for us a significant example of the family of nations building mutual trust, support and respect.

In this spirit of community, the Solomon Islands proposes that, to assist the movement towards a universal United Nations, the fiftieth session of the General Assembly consider and adopt a plan to bring into the Organization the several nations that have expressed their desire to become Member States but are as yet financially or politically unable to do so.

Among the ends for which "We the peoples" of the world established the United Nations, as stated in the Charter, is

> "to practise tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours".

The Solomon Islands — an ethnically and linguistically diverse, developing nation — believes that it is time to formulate an agenda for democracy and tolerance to complement "An Agenda for Peace" and "An Agenda for Development". Based upon the experience of the United Nations system in assisting nations to nurture democratic institutions and tolerance, this new agenda will offer humankind the goal of the spiritual security that is the essence of the objectives we seek in the Agendas for peace and development.

Spiritual security is essential if the purposes of the United Nations, stated in Article 1 of the Charter, are to be realized. Spiritual security is critical if the United Nations is to be, in the words of the Charter,

> "a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations"

in attaining peace, international cooperation and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The proposed agenda for democracy and tolerance will be the vital link in the triad of Agendas, which will buttress the new diplomacy that is emerging. People-centred, the new diplomacy embraces the ideals of democracy, tolerance, peaceful coexistence, the rights of persons and peoples, equity and sustainable development.

On 14 February 1919, President Woodrow Wilson told the Paris Peace Conference that, throughout the Covenant of the League of Nations:

> "We are depending primarily and chiefly upon one great force, and that is the moral force of the public opinion of the world — the cleansing and clarifying and compelling influences of publicity."

The League of Nations failed to maintain peace and security, but the moral force of public opinion, now quickly formed by nearly instant communications, is potentially enormous. We have experienced this at the United Nations. How to keep the new diplomacy — people-centred development — responsive to the moral force of public opinion is one of the greatest challenges facing all the nations and the peoples of the world in the centuries to come. Let us all hope and, with optimism for the future, instil greater positivity in the work of the United Nations for greater achievement, as together we make a quantum leap into the twenty-first century.

24. The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

Address by
H.E. Mr. Jacques F. Poos, Deputy Prime Minister
and Minister for Foreign Affairs

[Delivered in French]

We are gathered today to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization. In 1945, 51 countries, emerging from the most devastating war that humanity had ever known, met at San Francisco to make a commitment to build together a just and lasting peace.

Determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, the international community wanted to create an organization that could prevent similar horrors in the future by establishing the political, economic and social conditions of a new, more peaceful and safer world.

The great hopes placed in the United Nations were soon tempered by the cold war, which divided the world into two antagonistic military and ideological blocs. In spite of the ensuing paralysis, our Organization was able to ensure relative stability by preventing the outbreak of a major conflagration and by limiting the scope and intensity of existing conflicts. It was able to lay down the principal guidelines that allowed it peacefully to settle difficult problems and, in many cases, to substitute dialogue and negotiation for armed hostility.

Above and beyond the maintenance of international peace and security, the United Nations created conditions propitious to considerable progress in many other sectors. Through its activities, the United Nations improved the living conditions of and offered sanctuary to hundreds of millions of the disinherited and homeless. It helped to eradicate infectious diseases and to reduce infant mortality throughout the world. It is no coincidence that the first important text adopted by our Organization after the San Francisco Conference was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The end of the cold war ushered in a new era in which the search for lasting peace again seemed possible. Yet, only a few years after this remarkable manifestation of hope, we are again plagued by doubt and uncertainty as to the ability of the international community to put an end to ever-increasing conflicts. In Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America, we see internal conflicts that are tearing States apart and complex crises in which political, military and humanitarian elements are inextricably linked.

Moreover, threats of war of a very different kind have emerged, confronting our Organization with new challenges. These threats include international terrorism, the proliferation of arms, drug trafficking and environmental degradation. The search for responses to these threats can only be undertaken at the global level. The United Nations alone has the authority and legitimacy to attempt to meet these challenges.

Let us not make the United Nations a scapegoat for our own failings. It is not the United Nations that has disappointed our hopes but we, the Member States, which have not lived up to the ideals of our Organization and deny it the political and financial means to fulfil the mandate we have entrusted to it.

If we wish to prepare our Organization for the next 50 years of its existence, we must reform it so as to allow it to respond more effectively to the old challenges and the new ones which we are facing. We must find an immediate solution to the financial crisis, guarantee the balanced expansion of the Security Council, develop preventive diplomacy and improve the organization of peace-keeping operations. In the economic and social field, we must strengthen our capacity to promote sustainable development by merging organs and functions and creating an economic security council. These are the principal reforms we must institute.

The aspirations of the founding fathers of the United Nations are as valid today as they were 50 years ago. The Organization they handed down to us is a reflection of our world, with all its imperfections and hopes. We must show ourselves to be worthy of the enthusiasm which the Organization continues to inspire in the peoples of the world. Luxembourg will continue resolutely to support the cause of the United Nations.

25. The Republic of Ecuador

Address by
H.E. Dr. Galo Leoro, Minister for Foreign Affairs

[*Delivered in Spanish*]

On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, Ecuador wishes to stress the fact that, in accordance with the lofty goals set out in the Charter, the world Organization has achieved important successes, among which is the avoidance of a third world war that would have entailed a nuclear holocaust for all humanity. On the other hand, there have been major failures in many areas, as witnessed by the persistence of serious problems, chiefly due to the absence of a real desire for international cooperation.

Many distinct conflicts have led to a significant loss of human life, unspeakable suffering, hunger and misery. Some of these have been resolved through United Nations action, while others have been settled through a variety of mechanisms outside our Organization. Serious problems persist, wreaking havoc at all levels.

The concept of peace and security which, in 1945, was understood mainly in the context of traditional military concerns in the framework of collective security, has been appropriately expanded to embrace the political, economic and social conditions in which peoples live. State sovereignty is in the process of evolving, as is the very institution of the State. The promotion of democracy and the defence and protection of human rights have become universal norms.

Notwithstanding the failures and political and social changes of recent years, the purposes and principles of the United Nations have survived intact, including the maintenance of international peace and security, the avoidance of resort to the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State and the obligation to settle international disputes by exclusively peaceful means, which entails the non-recognition of territories acquired by force. The Organization must also continue to strive to create the conditions of stability and well-being necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations, as well as the promotion of conditions conducive to progress and economic and social development for all.

To attend to the new and increasing demands being placed upon it by the international community, our Organization needs major structural change, adopted in keeping with the obligations derived from its supreme instrument, the Charter of San Francisco. Respect for the binding nature of this fundamental universal instrument is the only way to guarantee the survival of small and weak countries. Ecuador continues to be a firm supporter of the rule of law on the basis of the immutable principles of justice. Thus do we reaffirm our commitment to pursuing the ongoing quest for just and equitable solutions, arising from agreements mutually arrived at, to the conflicts that persist in the world, and particularly in our region.

We therefore applaud your statement, Mr. President, in welcoming His Holiness Pope John Paul II to the General Assembly, when you said:

> "that for the ideals of peace and fraternity to take root deeply among men they must be based on economic, social and cultural development as well as on the primacy of justice." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 20th meeting, p. 1)*

Ecuador likewise embraces with enthusiasm the challenge of the Pontiff to overcome our fear of the future and to do so together through

> "the common effort to build a civilization of love, founded on the universal values of peace, solidarity, justice and liberty." *(ibid., p. 6)*

26. The Republic of Guinea

Address by
H.E. Mr. Kozo Zoumanigui, Minister for Foreign Affairs

[*Delivered in French*]

Allow me to transmit to the General Assembly the heartfelt greetings of the people, the Government and General Lansana Conté, President of the Republic of Guinea, from whom I have the honour and the privilege to convey this message of solidarity:

> "Leaders of the world, I should like at the very outset to thank His Excellency the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros-Ghali, for the invitation he so kindly addressed to us. We also express our thanks to all those who have organized this anniversary celebration, which is such a resounding success.
>
> "Having discharged this duty, I should like to state that it is a genuine pleasure for me, on behalf of the Government of Guinea and on my own personal behalf, on this happy occasion of the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, to be able from this lofty rostrum to deliver to you not only a message of peace, friendship and the solidarity of the people of Guinea towards the peoples of the entire world, but, indeed, also one of hope, confidence and unbreakable faith in the United Nations and in the purposes and principles embodied in its Charter.
>
> "I take pleasure, finally, in paying a warm tribute to the achievement of the founding fathers, and to the singular distinction with which His Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations is managing affairs at the global level.
>
> "In attempting to take stock of the 50 years of our Organization's existence, I think it can be said that over this last half-century the United Nations has proved irreplaceable, unique as a tool for dialogue, a concerted approach, negotiation and international cooperation. Through all these years, it has provided the ideal framework and laboured tirelessly not only for the maintenance of international peace and security, but also to mobilize the international community towards a solution of the problems of the world's economic and social development.
>
> "The international political scene has over the last several years witnessed unprecedented change. One of the consequences of this profound development has been the emergence of new challenges, whose

diversity and complexity are matched only by their urgency. Suddenly, the responsibilities of the United Nations have grown considerably, its tasks multiplied, as it initiates, develops and consolidates new strategies designed to enhance the well-being of us all while ensuring a better future for generations to come.

"While our Organization has, certain setbacks notwithstanding, distinguished itself in its principle realm of competence, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security, its talent and capacity for responding promptly and effectively to the many demands placed upon it from around the world are still being sorely put to the test by the multiplicity of conflicts and other hotbeds of tension and, in particular, because of the weight of the burden of peace-keeping operations.

"Therefore, to be able to continue effectively and fully to play its role, the United Nations needs to be reinforced and to be given resources commensurate with the expectations of mankind. Against that background, the issuance of 'An Agenda for Peace' and 'An Agenda for Development' is particularly apposite at the end of this century. The international community is duty bound resolutely and steadfastly to support those documents.

"The direct nexus between peace and security on the one hand, and economic and social development on the other needs no further proof. After all, what do we observe today, if not that our world is chiefly characterized by inequalities, flagrant disparities and imbalances in the way wealth and resources are allocated?

"To cope with all this, mankind needs a new vision of its future, one which rests on the central idea of the role to be played by the United Nations in meeting the economic and social challenges we are facing.

"Peoples of the world, over the last five decades we have together thwarted the most diabolical designs and conquered the most abject kinds of discrimination. Together we must overcome, through our Organization, all the forms of exclusion — all are inadmissible — that afflict groups of men and women, of countries, indeed, of entire regions of the world.

"The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations which we are commemorating today quite rightly affords us the opportunity to stop and reflect together on the new role to be given to this Organization. Let this anniversary give mankind the chance to bestow upon itself a still stronger institution, driven by a spirit of solidarity, of fruitful cooperation, capable of mobilizing the means and the resources necessary to meet the challenges before us — challenges such as maintaining international peace and security in the world and achieving economic and social development, justice, democracy and equality.

"Long live the United Nations!"

27. Burkina Faso

Address by

H.E. Mr. Ablassé Ouédraogo, Minister for Foreign Affairs

[Delivered in French]

The United Nations is 50 years old. But we have only five minutes to speak of these 50 years and of the future. That is the price of success for an Organization that is truly global.

The Charter of the United Nations is hailed and revered; yet the world could be in much better health.

If mankind does not improve, we cannot benefit from institutions, no matter how good they may be.

Ravaged by conflicts, epidemics and natural disasters, our world today is suffering from an even greater evil. That evil is at the root of what is tearing us apart, crucifying us and destroying us.

Openness to others is disregarded. Indifference and self-absorption are today among the greatest dangers facing humanity. The spirit and philosophy of the times demonstrate the tendency to think that, these days, "the others" are the homeless, refugees, street children, immigrants, the poor, rivals, adversaries, enemies, those who are different, foreigners. "The others" have become those that one seeks to avoid.

And yet these last 50 years have witnessed striking and considerable manifestations of solidarity on the part of man towards his fellow man. But these have become eroded or have faded, finally giving rise to a vexing and devastating concept: donor fatigue.

But in a healthy relationship, what is a man if he knows not how to give? What is a man if he knows not how to receive? Does it not call for a review of the situation as soon as possible when it is always the same ones who give and the same ones who receive? Is this not an indication that injustice has become built into the structure of today's world?

On the threshold of the twenty-first century, above and beyond the theory of States and of sovereignty, beyond the relationship of force, beyond the ambitions of domination, should we not substitute people, societies, nations, States? Should we not give new impetus to what was enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations in the words "We the peoples", and find again the human being and the humanity in each and every one of us and in each and every one of our acts?

Only then will we progress with certainty towards a world of solidarity, a world of progress, a world of justice and a world of peace.

That is the five-minute message that Burkina Faso wished to convey on the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

28. The Republic of Bolivia

Address by
H.E. Dr. Edgar Camacho Omiste, Chairman of the Delegation

[Delivered in Spanish]

Special and unforeseen circumstances have prevented the attendance of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Bolivia, Mr. Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, on this occasion. I am charged, therefore, with the very important duty of paying this tribute to the United Nations and of conveying the cordial greetings of the Head of State of Bolivia to Their Excellencies the Heads of State and of Government of the world, to you, Mr. President, and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

For Bolivia, this solemn ceremony symbolizes an act of faith in the capacity of human beings to live together in harmony. It represents a renewal of our commitment to work in the conviction that freedom and equality will prevail on this Earth.

In Bolivia we remember with admiration the ability and vision of those distinguished figures who laid the foundations of the United Nations, and we pay special tribute to our fellow countrymen who attended the historic San Francisco Conference, under the guidance of the then President of our Republic, Colonel Gualberto Villaroel.

The contribution of the Bolivian delegates to that debate was particularly important. Therefore, 50 years later, we reiterate the conviction that lasting peace on Earth requires justice in international relations and within each country.

Our delegates maintained that, if harmony were to prevail among nations, solutions had to be found to situations that impeded fraternal relations among peoples. Justice alone will be the foundation of a true peace.

Some day in the not-too-distant future there will be an end to situations of oppression and dependency, just as colonialism will come to an end, extreme poverty will disappear, friendship among peoples will flourish, and the free and sovereign presence of Bolivia on the Pacific Ocean will become possible.

The power politics of yesterday will have to give way to brotherhood and cooperation as central instruments in the new international relations.

Bolivia encourages friendship among countries and calls for cooperation based on dignity, sovereign equality, respect for diversity, and understanding of the needs and legitimate concerns of peoples.

Good-neighbourly relations require not only sincerity on the part of all, but, most particularly, respect for others and the desire to contribute to the welfare of our brotherly peoples, to raise standards of living, to promote job opportunities and to achieve specific goals in the areas of health, education and housing, while improving access to financing, technology and world markets.

On the basis of these principles, all countries will be active members of the world community, capable of making sustainable development possible, of capitalizing and creating enterprises to respond to the challenges of the day, of eradicating consumption of and trafficking in harmful substances, of releasing humankind from the arms race and the nuclear threat, of consolidating political stability and participatory democracy, of respecting cultural and ethnic diversity, and of creating real conditions for all men and women, the elderly, the youth and children — to live in a better world of true solidarity.

Thus, the agenda of the United Nations for the years to come has been spelt out. The Government of Bolivia, together with the other countries of the Rio Group, the Ibero-American countries and the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, believes that our next duties include convening an international conference against the abuse and illegal trafficking of drugs, the objective of which would be to strengthen the fight against drugs, thus translating the policies of the 1988 Vienna Conference into reality.

We in Bolivia have learned that stagnation corrodes institutions and paralyses ideologies, while change is a wellspring of life and the key to social change. Thus, to protect the worldly and spiritual heritage of nations, we must change attitudes, discover new dimensions of development, modify the international system, and adopt dynamic forms of cooperation, tolerance and universal understanding. We must also strengthen the role of the General Assembly, make the Security Council more effective and representative, confer effective authority on the Economic and Social Council and ensure that law will be the instrument by which international justice is secured.

In Bolivia we are building a multicultural and multilingual country across our Andean highlands and our plains; our country is preparing honourably to fulfil its role in the universal community of the future.

29. Organization of the Islamic Conference

Address by
H.E. Dr. Hamid Algabid, Secretary-General

[Delivered in French]

Half a century ago, the world, rising from the ruins of two devastating world wars and from the horror and pain they caused, took the measure of outrages that had reached the height of inhumanity. It saw that war, the occupation of the territory of others, aggression and the denial of the national rights of peoples were no longer profitable and could no longer be accepted. Thus, when the United Nations was founded at San Francisco in 1945, the desire was to make diplomacy and negotiation the preferred tools for settling disputes, conflicts and crises.

The imperative need to preserve peace and save succeeding generations from the scourge of war demands adherence to universally recognized principles and a firm determination to defend law and legality wherever they are under threat. Here, the United Nations has done remarkable work. Similarly, inspiring work has been done by the entire United Nations system in the areas of development, culture, health, and social and humanitarian affairs in all regions, including in the Islamic world.

In speaking of these important accomplishments, I want to take the opportunity afforded by this celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations humbly and gratefully to honour the memory of all those, now departed, who so generously laboured to create this Organization. I address my heartfelt congratulations also to those who continue to serve it with courage and dedication, including, first and foremost, the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros-Ghali.

Notwithstanding the sustained efforts of the world community, hotbeds of tension and conflict have once again appeared in many places. Some recall in their atrocities the darkest days of human history. Moreover, harsh challenges face the contemporary world: poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, underdevelopment, terrorism in all its forms and in its indiscriminate association with various faiths, the unbridled arms race, and the threats to our environment. All of these challenges demand genuine initiative and an unswerving determination to give concrete form to solidarity and thus to give common interests precedence over individual interests.

Support for the ideal of democracy and the quest for better understanding among peoples can succeed only through greater cultural interaction and productive spiritual relationships marked by a spirit of openness, dialogue and tolerance.

In this connection, cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which are so similar in their principles and purposes, has contributed to creating conditions conducive to dialogue and harmony among peoples and nations.

Since the outbreak of the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Organization of the Islamic Conference has worked hand-in-hand with the international community in its efforts to ensure that law, justice, moral values and democratic principles prevail. I want to hail the dynamic cooperation, which has grown recently, between the international Contact Group on Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Contact Group of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

The same is true for the Middle East peace process — concerning which the agreements recently signed at Washington have justified hopes for a just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine, Al-Quds Al-Sharif and the Syrian Golan — and for the fratricidal wars in Afghanistan, Somalia and Tajikistan, where the efforts of both organizations in so many spheres continue and grow stronger.

The actions of the international community would gain in breadth if more were done to eliminate the tension created by the conflicts regarding Jammu and Kashmir and Nagorny Karabakh, and by the question of Cyprus.

Finally, cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference in the economic, cultural and humanitarian arenas is beginning to show promising signs. It is with this promise of partnership for peace and for development that I extend best wishes to the United Nations on the threshold of the third millennium for success in the achievement of its noble mission in the service of peace and progress.

30. Sovereign Military Order of Malta

Address by
H.E. Count Carlo Marullo di Condojanni,
Member of the Sovereign Council

[*Delivered in French*]

On the happy occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, I am honoured to extend to the General Assembly the greetings of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and of its Prince and Grand Master Frà Andrew Bertie. Our institution has been a Permanent Observer to the General Assembly for over a year, but has been a part of the international community for centuries. We are, therefore, in a good position to understand, with all the peoples around the world, the importance of today's commemoration, to applaud the progress that has been made and to join in efforts to ensure that the principles of the Charter are brought fully to life.

The inception of the United Nations 50 years ago, heralded the hopes for a new era of peace and well-being around the world. The aim was to leave behind us a war in which the atrocities were on a scale previously unknown to mankind, a war that, with the introduction of nuclear weapons, had convinced peoples and Governments that they had to seek peace at any price.

Today, following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the cold war, hopes for worldwide and lasting peace seem to be slightly closer to realization, and it is a privilege for me to express to the General Assembly the wish of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta to see resolute and effective commitment in the community of nations.

The Sovereign Military Order of Malta, which was established about nine centuries ago in Jerusalem, is now based in Rome. It maintains diplomatic relations at the level of Ambassador with 68 Member States of the United Nations, which is more than one-third of its current membership. That alone explains the position of the Order in the international community, whose members recognize it as a *par inter pares*.

Today the flag of the Order flies over specialized hospitals, clinics, first-aid posts and dispensaries that provide assistance throughout the world to children, the aged, the handicapped or those suffering from chronic diseases. These structures provide medical and pharmaceutical attention in places where epidemics are at their height. Quite recently, we agreed to contribute to the Blue Helmets in Lebanon and Kuwait, as we have done in the past in Central America. Furthermore, in 1989 the Order provided assistance to thousand of refugees in East Germany who were travelling to West Germany through Hungary and Austria. The Order was also one of the first to provide humanitarian assistance in the former Yugoslavia.

The Order sees humanitarian assistance as a way to safeguard fundamental human rights and, as such, as an essential tool in helping to guarantee the international peace and security that political, military and diplomatic action needs if it is to be able to establish an international order worthy of man. Inspired by these values, the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, thanks to its political neutrality and supranational character, can help to pacify and mediate, at the same time as ensuring respect for dialogue and understanding among peoples.

The values and purposes of our Order fit well with Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations, and as a Permanent Observer the Order is fully available to cooperate with the United Nations, particularly in the field of humanitarian assistance. In particular, the Order is ready to make itself available to find ways to provide medical assistance in support of peacekeeping operations.

With these observations in mind, the people of the Order of Malta join all the peoples of the United Nations in today's celebration and in their commitment to cooperate in efforts to improve the efficiency of the implementation of the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

In conclusion, allow me to express the hope that the beginning of the second 50 years of the existence of the United Nations will — with the help of the Almighty — usher in the dawn of a new era for future generations. I trust that the United Nations will indeed increasingly be able to live up to the aspirations of the people to peace, well-being, social progress and the solidarity of all peoples.

31. International Organization for Migration

Address by

H.E. Mr. James N. Purcell, Jr., Director-General

On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, I am honoured that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) can share in this truly historic event. IOM, the organization I represent, was created as an intergovernmental organization nearly 45 years ago by concerned States that were convinced that individuals, economies and societies would all benefit from orderly responses to migration. IOM has steadily grown since then and is currently composed of 96 member and observer States. These States, representing all regions of the world, ensure a global character in our approach to today's migration issues.

In responding to global migration needs, IOM not only offers technical assistance to States and facilitates the orderly and planned migration of nationals, but also has a history of reacting quickly in situations that require the timely movement of large numbers of vulnerable persons, such as in the Gulf States in 1992 and more recently in various parts of Africa, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and elsewhere. Since our founding, we have worked in close cooperation with the United Nations system. I am pleased to say that the links between IOM and the United Nations are strong and getting stronger, especially over the course of the past three years since IOM became an Observer of the sessions and work of the General Assembly.

One frequently hears that the world is becoming ever more complex. Certainly, the range of global issues with which the international community is grappling reflects this increasing complexity: human rights, population, poverty, public health, environmental degradation, economic and social development, ethnic conflicts and security issues. Migration sits at the confluence of most of these issues, and in many ways can be viewed as one of the major consequences of the failure to date to deal adequately with their destabilizing aspects.

How the world and the international community respond to migration and migratory pressures is of critical importance to global stability and well-being. Once considered primarily as a positive force in nation-building, migrants are now, more often than not, seen as the visible messengers of society's failures. When migrants move without legal means, as many do, and are stopped, as many are, they severely overburden national systems no longer structured or financed to deal with them humanely and effectively.

A comprehensive framework which views the migration phenomenon in its entirety, beginning with solutions to root causes, is what is required in today's complex world. IOM, with its operational and policy-based migration mandate, can be a key resource in helping to explore comprehensive solutions.

IOM can do this, however, only in close partnership with the United Nations, which has a critical role to play in the resolution of the great issues of our day, including migration.

I would, however, submit that our pursuit of comprehensive solutions will not require a new or more complex international system. Instead, joint efforts on such key issues as migration, which require each member of the extended international family to effectively play its own role in relation to its own mandate, are the only realistic response. Any examination of the role and structure of organizations must provide support for collaborative mechanisms which draw on the strengths of all entities, both inside and outside the United Nations.

IOM is eager to contribute to solving some of these pressing issues, building particularly on our growing association with the United Nations. We see numerous opportunities for strengthening the ties that can and must bind us closer together. I am confident that the good offices of all concerned in putting in train forward-looking approaches will help ensure even greater success for the United Nations in the next 50 years.

32. International Committee of the Red Cross

Address by
H.E. Dr. Cornelio Sommaruga, President

[*Delivered in French*]

Abounding in symbolism, the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations invites us to ponder history. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is therefore pleased to join in this moment which enables it to reaffirm its faith in mankind by paying tribute to an institution moulded in its image — imperfect, unique, yet irreplaceable.

Entirely different in terms of their nature and objectives, the United Nations and the ICRC are nevertheless based on the same humanistic philosophy: for the United Nations in 1945 as for the ICRC in 1864 and in 1949, it was a question of vanquishing the demons of war in the aftermath of lethal and devastating conflicts by striving to building a universality of values which unite and unify.

The Charter of the United Nations and the Geneva Conventions of 1949 relative to the protection of victims of war, adopted in the wake of the Second World War, today are the common heritage of humanity. The drafters of these instruments demonstrated great lucidity, aware as they were that it was an illusion to think that war could be banned, so the two actions were completely distinct and have remained so.

In the past 50 years these universal instruments have stood unchallenged. It is remarkable, in fact, to note that the new Member States adhered both to the spirit of Geneva and the spirit of San Francisco, and have even deepened it.

While there exists today a consensus regarding values, making them a reality is still a daily challenge. Since 1945, over 120 conflicts have produced some 22 million victims and continue to inflict untold suffering. The proclaimed dedication to human rights is only equalled by the scorn that these rights are subjected to. In the face of this paradox, the ICRC, whose humanitarian action has grown considerably, would like here above all to be the spokesman of countless victims of armed conflicts, whether they are on the front page or forgotten.

But does not everyone share in the responsibility, the political responsibility of States, the responsibility of institutions, the responsibility of individuals?

Saving human beings in emergencies calls for a rapid humanitarian response, independent of any other type of consideration, if it is to attain its immediate objective, which is to help and protect. Of course, this is a limited, although indispensable, type of response. Evils must be prevented by attacking them at their root. The United Nations has continuously worked in this direction by creating the necessary conditions for the enjoyment of fundamental human rights. Political action remains a key element in the prevention of crises, the responsibility for which rests with States. Similarly, it is States, both individually and collectively through the United Nations, whose task it is to ensure respect for the provisions of international law, *inter alia*, the Geneva Conventions. It seems to me essential that the United Nations achieve progress in the establishment of a permanent international criminal court.

But a culture of tolerance and solidarity, of respect for minorities and of respect, quite simply, for others also depends upon individual attitudes to a large extent. The Red Cross, faithful to its fundamental principles, wishes to make a basic contribution to that end.

More frequent, deadly destabilizing crises confront us with unprecedented challenges. It is urgent to reject the idea that regression is inevitable. Combating intolerance, the need to respect human dignity in all circumstances, compels us to form a common front at all times.

c. Statements delivered at the 37th plenary meeting held on 23 October 1995

1. The Republic of Uganda

Address by
H.E. Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President

I tried to see whether I could read my statement in the stipulated five minutes and I found that I could not, so I have decided to summarize it instead of attempting to read it and breaking the rule.

First I wish to inform the Assembly that about nine months ago I was invited to Buenos Aires to address a seminar. The topic I was given to speak on was "Does Africa Matter?" That means that in the minds of some people the question whether Africa matters is being raised. Of course Africa matters. Africa covers an area of 30 million square kilometres. It is the second largest continent in the world. It now has 700 million people. Obviously it matters.

The reason some people are wondering why Africa matters is because of the backwardness of its economies and population. The main reason for that backwardness is the structure of society. I recently carried out a study and found that in the United Kingdom 52 per cent of the people are members of the middle class; 46 per cent of the people in the United Kingdom are members of the skilled working class; 2 per cent of the people are what is called the upper class — which I think means the aristocracy.

What is the picture in Uganda? In Uganda 92 per cent of the people are peasants. The characteristic of peasant societies is that, first, they are parochial and, secondly, they base themselves on a subsistence economy. A characteristic of middle-class societies is that the middle class is the most enterprising social group in the history of man. Therefore the absence of the middle class in Uganda — and I presume in other African countries — is the source of the many problems we have in Africa.

Who caused this social distortion? Why is it that in the United Kingdom 52 per cent of the people are members of the middle class and there are no peasants? There are no longer any peasants in Europe. There were peasants in Europe 300 years ago. By the time of the French Revolution the peasant class was a strong class in Europe. What happened? Why is it that in Europe there is no longer a peasant class yet in Africa the peasant class is the dominant class? What are the reasons?

The main culprit is colonialism, because colonialism stopped the emergence of the middle class. Yet the middle class is a cosmopolitan-minded group. It consists of people who think about the whole world because these people are businessmen. They want to do business in the whole world.

Therefore, when Africa is deficient in a middle class it means it is deficient in entrepreneurship and cosmopolitan ideas.

What do we do to redress the situation? There are five points to which we are addressing ourselves in Uganda. First, democratic governance — to have democracy; secondly, a liberalized economy, an economy that makes it easy for people to do business; thirdly, universal and compulsory education — sending everybody to school whether or not they want to go to school; fourthly, expanding the infrastructure — especially roads and power so that those who are doing business have the means to take their products to the markets; and, fifthly, regional integration — which means the integration of markets because one cannot produce unless there are markets to absorb what one produces.

Those are the five points that we in Uganda propose in order to eliminate the bottleneck of having a society without the very modern force that has been responsible for development in other areas, that is, a middle class.

I have been hearing talk that apart from wondering whether or not Africa matters, people are worried that Africa is being marginalized. When I ask, "What do you mean by saying that Africa is being marginalized?", they say that Africa is being forgotten by Europe. I am not worried about that. Africa will develop whether or not Europe's forgets Africa. It is my opinion that our development does not depend on Europe's remembering us. It does not matter if we are forgotten or marginalized but if members read my short statement they will see that it is crucial that we in Africa solve these bottleneck problems and the endogenous factors — the factors within Africa that have stopped us from developing. The exogenous factors, those from outside Africa, are only secondary, not primary.

Even if we get aid from the West, if we do not solve these internal bottlenecks and endogenous factors within our own countries there will be no development. On the other hand, even if we do not get any help, provided we solve the endogenous bottlenecks I am sure we shall develop.

Does that mean that Europe should not help us? No, Europe should help us. First, the Europeans owe us debts. They caused us many problems. They came and plundered our economies. They used our economies to build themselves up so it is a moral requirement that Europe should help us if only to pay for past mistakes.

But in the case of Uganda we will develop, it is in our hands and does not depend on whether or not they help us. That is why we fought for freedom. We now have freedom and we will develop one way or any other.

I come now to the United Nations. I commend the United Nations for maintaining peace over the past 50 years but it has been doing so without resources. Therefore I appeal to States that owe money to the United Nations to pay up. I was looking at the list and found that Uganda was not so bad when it came to paying its dues to the United Nations but it is important that the more powerful States should pay their United Nations dues.

However there is one problem I have found in United Nations programmes. It seems that we do not clearly define the circumstances in which the United Nations should be involved.

In the case of Haiti, it was easy for the United States to come in and support the legitimate authorities to assume power. But when the United Nations went into Somalia, who was the legal force there and who the illegal force? As far as I am concerned, all the groups in Somalia were illegal. There were groups that had emerged as a result of an explosion that was a consequence of long periods of disenfranchisement of the people. In such a situation, who is the good boy and who is the bad boy? We must be very careful there.

That is why in such a situation I would rather concentrate on reconciliation, which would give us an interim Government. Then we could have elections in order to re-establish legitimacy, and then we could support the legitimate force. But simply coming in as we did in Somalia, I think, was a mistake in the first instance. We just came in and tried to take sides with one of the groups when, in fact, all of the groups were illegitimate.

In some other situations we have had elections on the basis of one man, one vote. This is a good beginning. However, one needs to be very careful, because if the principle of one man, one vote is on a sectarian basis, what you will get is a majority Government that is not necessarily a national Government, but a Government of just one of the sectors. And if you simply back it without looking closely at the problems, you may find that you are backing a sectarian majority in an effort to monopolize power. So I think that there you need a little flexibility.

Therefore, finally, one of the remedies we have applied in Uganda is always having a broad-based Government. In Uganda we do not believe in the principle of winner-take-all. Our country was torn apart by criminals such as Idi Amin, but when we came in we were able to put our country together by using the formula of everybody being in power instead of some people being in power and others out.

Everyone must have heard about the bad situation in Rwanda. Uganda had suffered similarly. When such problems arise in Africa, I am sure many people in Europe think to themselves that this is African barbarism. When they see children being massacred and women being slaughtered, I think that people in the world thin to themselves that this is African barbarism. But I would like to end my short speech here by saying that this is not so. Before colonialism, we used to have tribal wars. I can say that in spite of those wars, women, children and captives were never killed. Africans do not kill women. When there are too many women, you marry them — you have three, four, five or six wives. You do not kill them. I have never seen an African killing

a woman. So this phenomenon of killing women and children is not African barbarism. It is another kind of barbarism: a barbarism created by the confluence of some foreign meddlers in our affairs with some local traitors. They are the ones who kill women, children and captives. Africans do not kill women and children.

2. The Republic of Botswana

Address by
H.E. Sir Ketumile Masire, NYB, GCMG, MP, President

Botswana congratulates Portugal on its assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at its fiftieth session. We salute the Secretary-General for his inspiring stewardship of the United Nations at this critical moment in its history.

The presence of so many world leaders in New York bears witness to the success of the United Nations during its half century of existence. For Botswana and the African continent, this is a particularly historic moment. When the Organization was born in San Francisco in 1945, only four African countries were able to adhere as independent countries to the Declaration of the United Nations. The rest of the continent was still under colonial domination.

Today the United Nations boasts of African States among its 185 Members. On this fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, Botswana pays a warm tribute to a great Organization which has touched the lives of millions across continents.

The United Nations has served us well. Small States such as my own have found in the United Nations a vital forum for collective bargaining. It has contributed to the advancement of international cooperation in solving economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems. It is a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends. That is why, in our view, we need a more balanced, but effective and efficient, Security Council to act as our common tool in the pursuit and defence of these common objectives.

Africa's importance to the world is fully recognized. Most recently, we have seen the international community, through the United Nations, score major successes in peace-keeping and peacemaking in Africa. In my subregion, Mozambique has been rescued from the clutches of a monstrous war, South Africa has been delivered from the evil of apartheid, Namibia is now an independent country and in Angola the peace process has entered a promising phase.

One of the milestones of the last session of the General Assembly was the return of South Africa to the family of free and civilized nations as a democratic and non-racial country. It is difficult to understand how institutionalized racism was allowed to exist for so long in the aftermath of the victory of democracy over Nazism and fascism.

In West Africa, fortunately, Liberia is slowly moving back to peace after six years of bloody conflict. Elsewhere in Africa, we have seen tragedies of unspeakable proportions. Only last year, genocide was visited upon the people of Rwanda. Somalia is still bleeding, seemingly remote from the concerns of the world. Sierra Leone is being consumed by a bitter civil war. These are painful and troubling situations for the Governments and the people of Africa.

While it is obvious that Africa needs to strengthen its capacity to predict, prevent and contain conflict situations, the fact remains that the United Nations has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Organization of African Unity stands ready to play its part, as envisaged in Articles 52 and 53 of the United Nations Charter.

On behalf of my country and my people, I reaffirm our binding faith in the Charter of this, our United Nations.

3. The Republic of Zaire

Address by
H.E. Maréchal Mobutu Sese Seko, President

[Delivered in French]

It is a great honour for me and for Zaire, my country, once again to address this distinguished General Assembly as we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

First of all, may I warmly congratulate a man who is himself a symbol, on the one hand, of the universalism of the United Nations, and on the other hand, of an Africa which has come of age to the extent that it has made an indelible mark on the United Nations by bestowing on it one of its best talents. I refer to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, a worthy son of whom Africa is particularly proud and who is, with competence and a spirit of self-sacrifice, fulfilling the difficult and delicate mission which is his.

In my capacity as one of the elder statesmen among African heads of state, I wish, on behalf of my colleagues and of the peoples of Africa, to congratulate you warmly, Sir, on the honour which the international community has conferred upon you by electing you to the presidency of this regular session which coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization.

For us Africans, the United Nations is first and foremost a synonym of re-found dignity and freedom. The flag of the United Nations represents, above all, the universal emblem of the decolonization of the States of our continent. Indeed, members will recall that when the Charter founding the United Nations was signed in San Francisco, only eight African countries were among the first 51 States to be admitted. From 1960 to 1990, that is, from the first proclamations of independence to the independence of Namibia, all the other African States have progressively won their seat within the United Nations.

Like any human endeavour, the United Nations is far from having reached perfection. A forum for dialogue and for debate, an instrument for the prevention and management of conflicts and a guarantor of international law and of the integrity of States, it remains the only global meeting point where each people can make its voice heard.

This privilege, which places large and small on an equal footing within the United Nations, has strongly characterized the links between my country, Zaire, and the Organization. In this respect, I would just like to recall two dates that are symbolic of this relationship. First of all, 20 September 1960, the date when Zaire was admitted to the United Nations, together with 12 other fraternal States from our continent.

The second date is 14 July 1960 when, in response to the appeal by Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba, the Security Council authorized the establishment of a military and civilian assistance operation in my country, which was then shaken by an armed conflict during which the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, on a peace mission to Zaire, died on African soil.

The United Nations may, it is true, fall short of our expectations. It sometimes fails. None the less, Zaire believes that recognition of this fact should first and foremost prompt Member States to seek further cohesion at higher levels and, in particular, at the regional level, as Article 52 of the Charter of the United Nations invites us to do.

In order to restore peace and stability in Africa, the United Nations should endorse the option chosen in 1963 by the founding fathers of the Organization of African Unity, that is, the inviolability of the borders inherited from colonialism. The political translation of this principle lies in safeguarding multi-ethnic States within which the rights of minorities are guaranteed.

It is desirable, in view of the new shape of the world, that the adaptation of the United Nations be extended to all its organs, including the Security Council.

Those who won the last world war conceived the Security Council as an organ within which their viewpoints were to prevail. While the geopolitics of that time might have justified such a state of affairs, today it must be recognized that, given the new international situation and the role expected of the United Nations, the exclusion of Africa and of certain powers is no longer justifiable and is an intolerable injustice. Hence, a revision of permanent representation on the Security Council is a logical demand and is necessary for the harmonious functioning of the United Nations system.

At this particular point in the history of our Organization, a courageous decision by the international community in this direction can only strengthen the role of the United Nations and will be recorded forever in the annals of our Organization for the greater good of present and future generations.

In the text of my statement which I have deposited with the Secretariat, I have provided a complete overview of the major problems of the day affecting Zaire, Africa and the world. I place special stress on the need to respect the sovereignty of Member States and draw the attention of our Organization to the emergence of a dangerous phenomenon, cynically termed the right of intervention.

I draw the attention of the United Nations to the tragedy that the phenomenon of refugees represents today and reiterate the proposal made at the Copenhagen Summit regarding the organization of a world conference on refugees.

Lastly, I could not fail to mention the distressing problem of Rwanda and Burundi, which is a dangerous threat to the peace, stability and development of the entire central and eastern regions of Africa. Initiatives are under way to find rapid solutions to this tragedy. These initiatives deserve the attention and support of the international community.

Bearing in mind the situation now prevailing in my own country, I dwell at length in my statement on the ways and means of resolving it. That is why I invite the international community to support our efforts with a view to the rapid organization of free, democratic and transparent elections.

On the threshold of the second 50 years of the United Nations and the eve of the third millennium, an affirmation of peace and cohesion among peoples must, more than ever before, constitute the prime legacy to bequeath to future generations. More than ever, it befits the United Nations to be the guarantor and the depository of this legacy.

As regards Africa more specifically, with its mosaics of ethnic communities, with its economic lag, with its social handicaps, I affirm that, both within and outside the continent, we must make solidarity, security and development our watchwords for action and the spearhead of the fight against discord and injustice in the world.

4. The Republic of South Africa

Address by

H.E. Mr. Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, President

When distinguished leaders came together half a century ago to consign to the past a war that had pitted humanity against itself, the ruins and the smoke from the dying fires were the monument to what should not have been.

Fifty years after the formation of the United Nations we meet to affirm our commitment to the founding ideal and the common desire to better the life of all human beings. What challenges us who define ourselves as "states-persons" is the clarion call to dare to think that what we are about is people — the proverbial man and woman in the street. These — the poor, the hungry, the victims of petty tyrants, the objectives of policy — demand change. What challenges us is to ensure that none should enjoy lesser rights, and none be tormented because they are born different, hold contrary political views, or pray to God in a different manner.

We come from Africa, and South Africa, on this historic occasion to pay tribute to that founding ideal and to thank the United Nations for challenging with us a system that defined fellow humans as lesser beings. The youth, at whom we have directed most of our awareness campaign on this golden jubilee, should marvel at the nobility of our intentions. They are also bound to wonder why it should be that poverty still pervades the greater part of the globe; that wars continue to rage; and that many in positions of power and privilege pursue cold-hearted philosophies which terrifyingly proclaim "I am not my brother's keeper". For no one, in the North or the South, can escape the cold fact that we are a single humanity.

At the end of the cold war the poor had hoped that all humanity would earn a peace dividend, enabling this Organization to address an expectation it was born to address. And they challenge us today to ensure their security, not only in peace but also in prosperity.

The changed world circumstances permit of neither the continued maldistribution of resources nor the related maldistribution of decision-making power within this Organization itself. Indeed, the United Nations has to reassess its role, redefine its profile and reshape its structures. It should truly reflect the diversity of our universe and ensure equity among the nations in the exercise of power within the system of international relations in general, and the Security Council in particular.

We raise this matter to make the fundamental point that the agenda of the next century and the programme of action to promote it can be true to the purposes of this Organization only if they are set by all of us. We must, without delay, constitute a new leadership for the new age and bring sunshine into the hearts of billions, including women, the disabled and children.

Circumstances may tempt us to bend to the pressures of *realpolitik*. However, like the founders, we are faced with the task of ensuring the convergence of word and deed. But we are unlike them in that the obstacles we face are fewer and the conditions more auspicious.

As the United Nations matures into the new millennium, it is called upon to facilitate the birth of a new world order of peace, democracy and prosperity for all. Thus we can honour the memory of those who perished in pursuit of the founding ideal and protect future generations from the pestilences of war, hunger, disease, ignorance and environmental degradation.

The time to act is now.

5. The French Republic

Address by
H.E. Mr. Jacques Chirac, President

[*Delivered in French*]

The world needs the United Nations.

Fifty years after the founding of the United Nations, at a time when there are questions and doubts in some quarters, I want to express France's confidence in our Organization and the high esteem that it has for the Secretary-General.

Confidence and, therefore, commitment. France has always been a leader in the search for peaceful solutions to the crises of our times. From Cambodia to Bosnia, it has become the leading contributor of United Nations troops.

Commitment too in the search for genuine disarmament. No one disputes France's major role in the negotiations to ban chemical weapons, to eliminate anti-personnel mines and to extend the Non-Proliferation Treaty indefinitely. Let no one doubt France's determination to ensure, in 1996, the success of the negotiations on the definitive, comprehensive and verifiable ban on nuclear testing. It was the first to speak out for the zero option. Today I wish to confirm that, once its final series of tests is completed next spring, France will sign the Protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga establishing a South Pacific nuclear-free zone.

Commitment, too, in the affirmation at the United Nations of a universal conscience, reflected in legal instruments and in programmes of action. It is in the vast area of human rights and solidarity among peoples that the irreplaceable nature of our Organization is most marked.

The world has changed in 50 years. In the past six, it has undergone a mutation that is perilous and yet brings hope. Let us help the United Nations adapt to this new world and play its role there effectively.

Let us make the Security Council more representative by enlarging the circle of its permanent members to include Germany, Japan and some large States from the South. Let us learn from our successes, as from our failures, by developing preventive diplomacy at the regional level and by increasing the rapid response capability of our Organization in the humanitarian and military spheres.

Let us seriously reflect together on the multilateral institutions of development aid: the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations agencies and programmes. France, which will preside over the

Group of 7 in 1996, will make the effectiveness of such aid a major theme at the summit in Lyons.

The world has changed. So, too, has the third world. Let us take into account the differentiation that has gradually become more marked between the countries that enjoy strong growth and attract foreign investment and those that are in difficulty and at risk of being marginalized. The struggle against exclusion must be taken up at the international level as well. Let us concentrate a greater share of bilateral and multilateral aid on the least developed countries, particularly those in Africa. Today, as we have all seen, Africa is making progress. Let us help it to succeed.

Let us do better in addressing problems that are becoming more serious: movements of populations, environmental degradation, major endemic diseases, drugs. Without neglecting emergency aid, let us restore greater emphasis on the search for long-term solutions by assigning a central place to structural policies and their financing.

Concentrating official development assistance on the least-developed countries and refocusing on long-term policies are the two main areas which the necessary adaptations must address. Increasing the effectiveness of development assistance means pursuing these reforms with all the actors — multilateral and bilateral, public and private. We will succeed only if we are ambitious, determined and, above all, united in a comprehensive and coherent approach.

The proposals which France is presenting today, as contained in the statement that we have distributed, will be developed in the months ahead at the United Nations and with all our partners, especially those in the European Union and in the Group of 7, our partners in the French-speaking world and those which are emerging as pillars of tomorrow's world. For the new approach needs to be based on a real consensus, which we must build together.

Fifty years after it was drafted, the aims set forth in our Charter have lost none of their relevance: peace and disarmament, democracy and development, the promotion of human rights and the fight against the great scourges that threaten mankind. In these 50 years, a body of common values has gradually come to be asserted, thanks to the United Nations.

Today, we must focus our efforts on the adaptation and renewal of our Organization, above all by giving it the resources to operate. The temptation to disengage threatens the very existence of the United Nations. It is not acceptable that many countries, particularly the foremost among them, should let their arrears pile up, thereby bankrupting an Organization to which all the world's Heads of State and Government have come, in an unprecedented event, to affirm its irreplaceable nature on this, its anniversary day. The world needs solidarity, and yes, it needs the United Nations.

6.
The Republic of Austria

Address by
H.E. Dr. Thomas Klestil, Federal President

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is marked by a fascinating yet irritating contradiction. Many of the States Members of the United Nations believe that this jubilee is taking place at one of the most difficult moments of its history. Crisis is the word of the day. At the same time, more heads of State and Government are assembled here than ever before and more human beings, watching this gathering from every corner of the world, are convinced that the United Nations is indispensable to the very survival of mankind.

Ever since the first moments of its existence, the United Nations has been torn between idealism and power politics, between solidarity and egoism. It has always mirrored the state of the world, but at the same time it has been much more than the sum total of national interests. But the most fateful contradiction was already present at its creation. It was to be a community of nations, but the famous opening words of the Charter read: "We the peoples".

The history of the United Nations is the perpetual attempt to bring the world Organization closer to the people and to forge it into a genuine community of humankind. On the Organization's fiftieth birthday, the United Nations Members assembled here today sense more than ever the growing need to transcend the confines of the nation-State.

The experience of the first half-century of our Organization has shown, time and again, that people are ahead of their Governments. And the burning problems on the eve of the twenty-first century — the environment, development, human rights, population growth — force us to go beyond our traditional methods of international cooperation and crisis management. Thus, the time has come for a new beginning.

As the only instrument for global action, the United Nations has to accomplish a swift transition. Its primary role is to be open — open to new realities in a multifaceted world, open to new social and cultural aspirations and open to a dramatic change in paradigms. The profound transformations of our time, the rapidly growing importance and power of non-State actors — such as the media, religious groups or business communities — and the growing role of civil society demand a new dimension of international cooperation.

Wherever this process of reform may lead us we should never forget that the creation of the United Nations, 50 years ago, was an act of faith — and its renewal also has to be an act of faith. There is, however, a significant difference: today's faith in the United Nations is based not only on the values and principles we all share, but also on the record of half a century of remarkable achievements — and, of course, of numerous shortcomings.

We can, and we must, learn the lessons from the tragedies that have occurred — and still continue to occur — in many parts of the world. We have to make it clear that no country, no one, shall be allowed to hide behind a wall of sovereignty and silence when human rights are violated — and no offence against humanity must remain unpunished.

The more we are ready to pool our sovereignty — and the European Union is a shining example of this development — the better we achieve these goals. And the more nations unite, the better for national and for human security.

Growing unity, to last, requires the eradication of misery, poverty and social injustice — and equal opportunities for all. Only a strong world Organization will be able to meet these challenges.

There is no better way to celebrate the founding of our Organization than to make it efficient and financially viable. It is most urgent that we recognize the need for reform — and it is most vital that we act quickly. For this we need political will and determination; we need a United Nations system that is universal and competitive; and we have to give it the necessary financial means.

All Member States must shoulder their obligations under international law to contribute to the expenses of the Organization. The money we devote to peace-keeping, preventive diplomacy, resettlement of refugees and the monitoring of human rights helps to prevent future catastrophes whose cost would be far greater.

My country, Austria, is one of the three headquarters of the United Nations. From Vienna the world Organization fights against drug abuse and organized crime, controls nuclear energy and assists development for people in need. We are proud to host such important United Nations activities in our country.

We stand ready to join others in preparing our Organization for a new era on this planet. We trust, Mr. President, that under your guidance, with the continued assistance of all United Nations staff, and with the unrelenting energy of our Secretary-General, this gathering will give a decisive impetus to this undertaking. History and the future are on the side of the United Nations.

7. The Hellenic Republic

Address by
H.E. Mr. Constantinos Stephanopoulos, President

[Delivered in French]

I still vividly recall the founding 50 years ago of the United Nations. It was an event which strongly impressed all of us, and we placed many hopes in the new international Organization which was the successor to the League of Nations.

My country, Greece, was emerging from the war, and from triple enemy occupation which followed, emerging destroyed and bloodied. Its people wanted to look to the future with optimism and with the certainty that a new era would dawn for it and for all of mankind. We wanted to believe that the era of wars, of bombings, executions, famines, and the other ills plaguing men were consigned to the past. The great Powers had taken firm and definitive decisions. Security and peace were going to prevail at last. Democracy was going to govern the destiny of nations, and the new international Organization was going to settle the disputes which could emerge among them.

Through its authority, the United Nations would make good the principles of international law throughout the world, as well as respect for human rights, which were to be the subject of a Universal Declaration. The Organization would also contribute to economic development and cooperation between peoples, and would take all necessary measures to avoid falling into the errors of the past, thus avoiding the weaknesses of the League of Nations. What great hopes we cherished at the time!

Since then, 50 years have elapsed, and we have become more realistic. Wars have not ceased — nor have the crimes which come in their wake, and misfortunes of peoples have resulted. International norms, if they are deprived of the possibility of implementation, have turned out to be unable to impose themselves — and democratic principles as well as human rights are often deliberately ignored and are replaced by interests and by opportunism.

But then one might wonder: Has nothing been done over these 50 years? No, it would be wrong to assert that. For indeed, many things have been achieved — although, perhaps, not as much as we would have hoped.

The primary objective — which is that of preserving new generations from the scourge of war — has been partially achieved. Thanks to what has been called the balance of terror among the Powers — but also thanks to the existence of the United Nations — it has been possible to avoid having the cold war transformed into a new global conflict. The United Nations has always been a forum for discussion and conciliation, and has been able to adopt significant resolutions which have not all remained a dead letter — quite the opposite.

Nevertheless, it is true that it has been impossible to avoid regional wars which were unleashed throughout the world. It is true that the responsibility for this does not fall on the United Nations — which did not have, and still does not have, the possibility to ensure the implementation of its own resolutions unless the great Powers reach agreement and give it the necessary means to do so. That said, one might perhaps note that the Organization has been lacking in firmness in the application of the just decisions which it has taken. However, insisting on its resolutions would have constituted strong moral pressure, which would have been all the more effective if the Organization had persevered consistently and firmly.

Cyprus is a striking example of the inability of the Organization to firmly and decisively condemn an act of military aggression that was followed by occupation, which still continues. The initial resolutions of the Security Council and of the General Assembly were not applied, and we have had to endure a military occupation which has been continuing for over 20 years.

We must in the most absolute and firm terms condemn not only the use of force but also the threat of its use, which also constitutes a flagrant violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Unfortunately, such cases have occurred quite recently. I refer, in saying this, to the threat of war which a Member State, through a decision of its National Assembly, made to Greece if it were to apply the provisions of the Convention on the Law of the Sea. What is astounding and totally inadmissible here is that this threat was not formulated to ward off an illegal act, but to prevent a perfectly legitimate act.

The efforts made by the United Nations have been more effective for economic development and cooperation between peoples — efforts which in many cases have been crowned with success. It also goes to the credit of the United Nations that it has made a firm proclamation of the need to respect and protect human rights, which, thanks to the policy followed by the United Nations, have been recognized and respected even in countries where they were in the past flagrantly violated. Doubtless, a great deal remains to be done — even in this area.

Strengthening the effectiveness of the United Nations would be to the advantage of all the members of the international community, which would then be acting within the framework of a system that would have full respect for the norms and principles of international law and in which the rule of the strongest would not be able to prevail.

In conclusion, I should like most sincerely to express the hope that the great and noble objectives of this Organization, the fiftieth anniversary of which we are celebrating, will be realized as soon as possible.

8.

The Republic of Moldova

Address by
H.E. Mr. Mircea Ion Snegur, President

[*Delivered in Romanian; English text provided by the delegation*]

The important international event that has brought us together has a profound historical significance. Shaken by the horrors of the Second World War and guided by the firm conviction that such apocalyptic cataclysms should never happen again, the free nations and their spiritual leaders laid the foundation of the United Nations 50 years ago.

From this perspective, the first words of the Charter — "We the peoples of the United Nations" — are a natural expression of the world community's feeling of shared responsibility for the destiny of humankind.

At the present time, the international community is at a crossroads. An imperative on its agenda is the conception of a new world. It is probably the first time in history that we perceive the world as the common heritage of humankind and war as a crime, inequality as an injustice, and ecological degradation as a joint responsibility.

Among the objectives of the world community, priority is given to those that aim at the creation of a new international system of political and economic relations. In this context, a fundamental role is attributed to the United Nations. Is the United Nations ready to assume such a role? This is a question every Member State has to answer.

The end of the cold war has given rise to hope in this respect. The United Nations has achieved remarkable results, especially over the last few years: peaceful environments introduced in Cambodia, Namibia, El Salvador and Mozambique; assistance in democracy-building to a number of States in different parts of the world; and the adoption, by consensus, of a significant number of documents and resolutions, to name but a few of these successes.

To do away with the structural and organizational deficiencies within the United Nations and to increase its positive impact, the Member States have introduced a number of initiatives aimed at revitalizing the United Nations and its capacity to adapt to the new realities. The Republic of Moldova supports the Organization's efforts to reform the Security Council and the restructuring of the United Nations Secretariat, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council and so on. We hope that these initiatives will be successful and that as a result the United Nations will be stronger and more efficient.

In another line of thinking, we consider it necessary to consolidate international law and to establish a new international legal order. At the same time, the need for a new legal framework for the post-cold-war period is becoming more and more evident. In this respect, it would be useful, we think, to deepen some of the existing concepts of international law, such as sovereignty, statehood and the competence of international organizations in general and, in particular, in correlation with the principle of self-determination. In our opinion, if these objectives are achieved, international law in the twenty-first century will become the language of international relations and will contribute to overcoming explosive situations such as those created artificially, and sometimes inspired and supported from abroad, around minority problems.

The Republic of Moldova became a Member of the United Nations immediately after gaining its independence. We took this step with the deep conviction that in the company of peace-loving nations and within the United Nations, we would succeed in building, faster and on a more solid foundation, a democratic and prosperous country, an independent and indivisible one, without foreign armies deployed on its territory.

After more than three years of membership, we find with satisfaction the advantages of our cooperation with the United Nations. We continue to count on the support that the United Nations can give us in urging the withdrawal, and in monitoring the withdrawal, of foreign troops from the territory of our country.

In conclusion, I should like to assure the Member States of our Organization that, in pursuing the complex task it has assumed — to build a peaceful, prosperous and democratic world — the United Nations will find in the Republic of Moldova a partner with conviction, true to the international responsibilities it has taken on.

9. Romania

Address by
H.E. Mr. Ion Iliescu, President

[*Delivered in French*]

Half a century of existence would seem to be an occasion for laudatory statements, even in the life of an international organization such as the United Nations. However, I believe that a gathering of more than 150 Heads of State and Government should be the occasion, not just for festive speeches, but also for framing clear answers to the fundamental questions that billions of citizens of this planet ask themselves each and every day, expecting us statesmen to come up with concrete solutions.

Are we to live in peace, or is the scourge of war still fiendishly lurking over our fate?

Shall we live in a more prosperous world, or shall we plunge deeper and deeper into the abyss of poverty?

Shall we live in a world capable of restoring to human beings their full dignity and creative powers, or shall we continue to watch impotently the waste of new generations, undermined by disease, famine, promiscuity, hatred and the lack of moral perspective?

Shall we all be contemporaries of the twenty-first century, or will history and civilization on Earth irreversibly splinter along the dividing lines of development?

Certainly, such questions are disconcerting. However, no one has a ready-made answer to them. That is why, perhaps, voices may be heard arguing that this is not the time to even ask these questions, here in the United Nations, as they do not fall within the purposes of our Organization.

To see that they really are wrong, we need only recall the hopes that animated the spirit and the work of the founding fathers of the United Nations.

In 1945, when we emerged from the inferno of the Second World War, the creation of a world in which the experience of total war could never be repeated was by no means an idealistic goal but the very essence of the endeavour to set up an organization with a universal vocation.

The prosperity of peoples achieved through cooperation was not merely the formula of some daydreamers, but the rationale behind an international body meant to constitute an orderly space for moral and legal values to govern the manifestation of the freedom of creation of human civilization in all its diversity.

International order based on legal norms, even if administered under the authority of the privileged club of the permanent members of the Security

Council, represented the embodiment of reason and of the hope that the world would never again fall prey to the demons of hatred and destruction.

Fifty years later, the relevance of those original questions remains unaltered.

Is this a reason to proclaim the failure of the United Nations?

Perhaps those who are rushing to proclaim it as such should recall, before pronouncing verdict, how much the experience of the past 50 years of the United Nations existence has mattered for the legitimacy of these questions; how much it has meant to the newly emerged States on the world map that there existed a forum for the assertion of their identity and for the establishment of standards for civilized behaviour in international relations; how much the United Nations has meant for the formulation of discourse and for the practical achievement of the communication, negotiation and discussion of crucial issues of the contemporary world, such as the regime of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, the identification and legal condemnation of armed aggression, the conservation of the cultural heritage of humanity and the building of the basis for cooperation in the name of development.

Certainly, the results do not yet respond to all needs and expectations. That is why I believe that our most important duty now, on the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, is to make the chance of a new beginning come to fruition.

Released from the fetters of bipolarity and of the cold war, the international system has regained its natural freedom of movement. Instead of ending, history is in fact starting again.

Concomitantly, however, all the problems that seemed forgotten or that had long been ignored, apparently at no cost, have emerged anew, such as the painful and ever growing gulf between "those who have and can" and "those who cannot have" created by the unequal development of the different regions of the world, by the accelerated destruction of the planetary environment, the sharp reduction in vital resources and the resurgence of violence nurtured by intolerance and disregard for fundamental human rights and freedoms.

In supporting the draft Declaration proposed for adoption by our General Assembly, I should like to emphasize the importance of the chapter devoted to development and, above all, to the measures required to fill the gap between rich and poor countries, the fundamental problem of global stability.

We have the chance of a new beginning. The United Nations has a very full agenda for the twenty-first century. What we can do, even as of today, is to review its functional structures, mechanisms and architecture in order to render them capable of addressing those issues. Therefore, I propose for the coming year a special General Assembly session to be dedicated to the structural preparation of the Organization for the agenda of the twenty-first century.

10. The Republic of Sierra Leone

Address by
H.E. Captain Valentine E. M. Strasser, Head of State,
Chairman of the National Provisional Ruling Council
and Secretary of State for Defence

Fifty years ago, after the guns fell silent, 800 delegates from 50 States, assembled in San Francisco, recognizing that future generations must never again face the lessons of 1945, signed the United Nations Charter document.

Securing a safer future and promoting the rights and freedoms of every living individual were the visions of those founding leaders.

Today, 135 additional States are members of this democratic organ, embracing almost every single State on this planet. Five decades on, the dreams of those delegates to the original San Francisco Conference are still shared by every single delegate here in New York.

The world has changed; giant nations are no longer confronting each other with deadly weapons; the iron curtain has given way to closer cooperation and the threat of nuclear annihilation has receded. Giant economic blocs are emerging and one-time arch enemies are today close allies.

These developments are parallel with the struggle for peoples under colonialism. Hardly any former colonial territory had achieved complete independence 50 years ago. But today, there is not a single State under colonial domination as the United Nations turns 50.

The resolution of ancient and emerging new conflicts and the provision of humanitarian aid to the millions of hungry and dying peoples of the world are problems that the United Nations, through its agencies, has grappled with.

These are remarkable achievements though, sadly, they have been restricted to the richer nations in the North; the ripples have yet to make a significant impact on the poorer small nations in the South.

While the wealthier North enjoys stability, democracy and economic prosperity, increased productivity, expanded markets and job opportunities, the under-developed poor wallow in debt, famine, instability, disease and death. Unfairly depressed commodity prices and a huge debt overhang threaten recovery for third-world developing economies. Capital and investment diversions to newly liberated Eastern Europe has left the crippled economies of the world's poorest starved.

Africa's debt alone has moved from a staggering $200 billion in 1993 to $211 billion in 1994. Real per capita aid has fallen since 1991 and sub-

Saharan Africa's share of direct foreign investment for developing nations has hit a mere five per cent. The level of overseas development cooperation is at its lowest ever. These imbalances are creating new tensions and divisions in Africa.

From Kigali to Monrovia, the dark continent is beleaguered with armed conflicts. Africa's armed movements, coups toppling democracies, are the results of acute poverty. Insurgencies threaten democracies and today armed guerrillas are a threat to the envisaged democracy in Sierra Leone. Democratic elections are billed for the first half of next year but there is speculation that armed activities may disrupt the entire process.

Early in March last year, noting the serious security situation which had the potential to complicate the Liberian peace process and destabilize the entire subregion, the Secretary-General appointed Ambassador Dinka, an Ethiopian, as his Special Envoy to Sierra Leone.

Five hundred thousand people are displaced and 200,000 more have fled their homeland. Disease and hunger in the camps kill many daily. Refugees and displaced persons are desperate for relief.

Rural community dislocations have left the entire electoral process with technical complexities and made free and fair democratic elections a lot more expensive.

With a dreadful guerrilla campaign confronting an International Monetary Fund adjusted economy, an absence of substantial donor funding will kill democracy in Sierra Leone. Guerrillas who kill peasants in remote villages, shoot cattle, set huts on fire, use drugs and teach 12-year-olds to carry AK47s are today's terrorists; they are a threat to Africa's democratization and they must be isolated. Insurgents who sit and talk with Governments must be urged to drop their lethal weapons and make peace.

Mr. President, I salute, through you, the Secretary-General, the Secretariat and all earlier Secretaries-General for 50 years of dedicated service.

Let us make the United Nations leaner and stronger and keep alive the vision of its founding leaders.

11. The Federative Republic of Brazil

Address by
H.E. Mr. Fernando Henrique Cardoso, President

[*Delivered in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*]

Let me say how proud Brazil is to see a distinguished representative from Portugal presiding over this historic session.

Fifty years ago, the delegates who signed the San Francisco Charter hoped to be creating a better world, one in which peace would be made possible through institutions capable of ensuring a high spirit of cooperation among peoples.

Like any other human endeavour, the United Nations has witnessed both success and failure. Throughout its existence, however, something very precious has been preserved: a feeling of hope. It is now time to renew it.

What do our peoples expect of us today? What would they want us to do for the United Nations?

I am sure that the answer to these questions is unequivocal: they would want the United Nations to be the guardian of the principles and rules that govern relations among States; they would want the United Nations to enforce them and guarantee that they be complied with, thereby providing a firm basis for the international order. They would want the United Nations to have effective instruments to promote conflict prevention and resolution as well as equitable forms of development.

It is an aspiration of all mankind that the United Nations be permanently engaged in the protection of human rights and in the fight against all forms of discrimination and tyranny.

We are living in better times than 50 years ago. By freeing the international agenda of the tensions generated by ideological confrontation, the end of the cold war created the conditions for a growing convergence of values, with democracy, economic freedom and social justice at centre stage.

New opportunities for international cooperation have emerged. The world conferences that the United Nations has been sponsoring — on environment, population, women, human rights, social development — have as a unifying theme the search for decent standards of living for all peoples and for each individual human being. Human advancement is therefore at the core of the international debate.

Beyond the issues addressed by these conferences, contemporary life presents challenges worthy of the attention of the United Nations.

This is a forum in which we should, within the complex context of globalization, work to overcome a persistent situation of social and economic inequalities giving rise to hopelessness and a feeling of exclusion. The goal of sustainable development must not be abandoned.

We must go from words to action so that peoples may be able to confront their divisions and so that people may be able to find in the United Nations a symbol of hope.

We must also work to make it possible for the extraordinary progress brought about by science and technology to be disseminated, for the benefit of all peoples.

Regarding international peace and security, the role of the United Nations will always be irreplaceable. In other issues, the United Nations will help us think together, guide decisions and create new patterns of legitimacy.

In all areas, our peoples expect from their respective leaders that we be able to maintain a constant dialogue based on truly universal values, a dialogue that can inspire the various regional institutions, and all nations individually, to work towards peace, development and cooperation.

Each one of our countries should contribute to ensuring that our Organization has the material means to carry out the tasks with which we ourselves have entrusted it. It is inadmissible that the United Nations is undergoing its worst financial crisis precisely when the leaders of the whole world are gathered to reaffirm their commitment to the United Nations Charter.

Let us be frank. We are celebrating this fiftieth anniversary with an underlying feeling of ambiguity, as we see the United Nations forced to resort to expediency in order to cover its huge deficits. This situation can paralyse our Organization just when its prospects look the brightest. We must find a lasting way out of this impasse.

I have come here today to reaffirm the Brazilian commitment to fight for a stronger, more active United Nations. This is not a new commitment, but one that reflects the history of Brazil's participation in this Organization. It has been a history of engagement, a history of the pursuit of peace and development, a history that makes us willing now to assume greater responsibilities in the deliberations of the United Nations.

This is the time to commemorate the renewal of the ideals of justice and peace which 50 years ago, led to this great creation of the human spirit that is the United Nations.

12. The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

Address by
H.E. Mr. Le Duc Anh, President

[*Delivered in Vietnamese; interpretation provided by the delegation*]

It is my particular pleasure, on behalf of the State and the people of Viet Nam, to attend the Special Commemorative Meeting for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. Over the past 50 years the United Nations has steadily grown. Its growth has been closely linked with the struggle of peoples for the right to self-determination and for the fundamental purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, namely international peace and security, development and prosperity for all nations, freedom and equality among nations whether large or small, sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and the peaceful settlement of disputes. These purposes and principles of the United Nations constitute common values of all mankind; all nations and peoples hold the same responsibility to preserve and uphold them. Today, when international exchanges and interactions are taking place with an ever growing intensity, scope and complexity, adherence to these fundamental purposes and principles takes on particular importance.

Paradoxically, just when mankind has acquired the technology in effect to reduce the distance between the Earth and other celestial bodies, the gap between the rich and the poor has widened alarmingly. Every day, we continue to witness the human tragedy of countless innocent people who are victims of wars, conflicts, economic embargoes, epidemics and the scourge of drugs. As a nation that experienced the horrible famine of 1945 and several decades of the ravages of war and embargo, the Vietnamese people know all too well the sorrow and pain of war as well as the harshness of economic embargo and the deprivations of poverty. We therefore feel deep empathy with the sufferings and losses of other peoples and individuals. From this rostrum, let me join my voice to the earnest call for the international community to do its utmost for the enjoyment by all individuals and nations in the world of their fundamental rights to a life in peace, equality and development and to good economic and social relations among States and peoples.

The urgent tasks before us are to eradicate hunger, alleviate poverty and create jobs; to uphold the right of women to equality and implement the right of children to care and protection; and to ensure respect for fundamental human rights alongside respect for the sovereignty, security and development of every nation. We also need to substantially cut down military expenditures, eliminate weapons of mass destruction, decrease the trade in arms and move towards the termination of arms production and trade, reduce and write off the debt of poor countries, and increase investments for development and for the protection of the environment.

What has been achieved by the United Nations over the past 50 years in the fields of the maintenance of international peace and security, assistance to the process of decolonization, promotion of friendly relations and cooperation for development among nations, and promotion of environmental, cultural, educational and humanitarian activities is indeed remarkable. However, the shortcomings of our Organization are by no means small. In order to discharge its mission successfully, the United Nations itself should be revitalized. First and foremost, it should be turned into a democratic organization in which relations among Member States as well as between the United Nations and each Member State are based on democracy and equality. The General Assembly must truly be the highest authority of the United Nations, responsible to mankind for all questions related to international peace and security, cooperation for development and other global issues. Agencies affiliated with the United Nations also need to be renewed, and should be made to operate more effectively, with greater dynamism and transparency, within the framework of the United Nations Charter and General Assembly resolutions.

It is a felicitous coincidence that 1995 is also the year when we commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, today the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. Over the last 50 years, the Vietnamese people have brought to bear their tradition of unity, self-reliance and resilience, enduring untold suffering and overcoming countless hardships and sacrifices to defend the independence of their motherland, gradually building for themselves a life of well-being, freedom and happiness. We are committed to the implementation of an independent, self-reliant and open foreign policy guided by the credo that Viet Nam wishes to befriend all countries in the international community, and strives for peace, independence and development. We have achieved encouraging results in this regard.

On this occasion, allow me to express my sincere gratitude to all countries and international organizations, to His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali and to the specialized agencies for their sympathy and valued assistance to Viet Nam. Viet Nam is committed to doing its utmost to make a worthy contribution to the lofty cause of the United Nations for peace, development, equality and justice, and for a finer world, as expressed in the motto of this special commemoration: "We the peoples of the United Nations ... united for a better world": a world without hatred or violence; a world of love and happiness.

he Republic of Equatorial Guinea

Address by
H.E. Mr. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President

livered Spanish]

Mr. President, I am deeply honoured to congratulate you on the high distinction that has been conferred upon you: that of directing the work of this important session of the General Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. This session will not only study current problems, but will evaluate the role of the Organization over the last 50 years.

We are at a crucial moment in the life of the Organization, which is now marking its fiftieth anniversary. A half century of existence means a great deal for an organization which was created to impose the will of mankind, after sufferings caused by war, injustice, discrimination, poverty, underdevelopment and the undervaluing of the individual.

The creation of the United Nations was, accordingly, an act of conscience and an intention to reform on the part of nations which decided to stop trying to take the upper hand, in order to build a new world based on friendship, understanding, freedom, justice, tolerance, cooperation and love.

After 50 years, it is natural that a work created by man should be examined to see if it continues to respond to the evolution of man and the times. Due to this, this session should provide an opportunity to evaluate in depth the history of the Organization, with regard to what it has done, what it has not done, and whether its purposes and principles continue to be valid in this dynamic and constantly evolving world.

In our opinion, the United Nations has not changed its philosophy, after 50 years, nor has man, like his own Creator, stopped being man since he was created.

We believe that the United Nations is the reflection of human integrity, and is inspired by the humanitarian spirit of man, because its purposes and principles are to guarantee the freedom and dignity of man, his well-being, and the security, justice and peace of nations.

No one has been opposed to or will oppose these basic goals because this would mean that man was denying his very self.

What we need to question here is man's behaviour regarding his own work. What have the States led by us men done with respect to our own post-war commitments? What is the attitude of man towards society, and what methods have we adopted to implement the spirit of the United Nations?

We must look at ourselves in the mirror to answer this question, because the United Nations, in its capacity as an international institution, has no need to blame itself, because it represents, as an example, the Bible or the Koran for the inspiration of the Member States. The successes of the United Nations cannot be attributed to its officials. We, each Member State, make up the United Nations. It was thus understood by its founders when they decided that the Charter would begin with the sentence, "We the peoples of the United Nations, determined to ..." Hence, to the extent that we respect this Charter, we can add up the successes or failures of the United Nations. Therefore, responsibility lies entirely with the Member States.

Along the same lines, it is appropriate that we should ask ourselves the following questions: Can we say that we have ended wars between nations? Can we say that we have done away with colonialism, when there is still a great desire on the part of some to dominate others? Have we really been able to ensure the freedom of man and respect for his rights? Do we respect the independence, sovereignty, and equality of all nations? After 50 years, can we say that the nations of the world live in peace, that individuals have their dignity and that there is well-being for humanity?

Our overall reply is that a fair amount has been achieved but much remains to be done because we can see in various parts of the world that there are large groups of human beings living in poverty, due to the egoism of the wealthy or the irrational behaviour of Governments. Racial, ethnic and social discrimination prevail, as does terrorism and the degeneration of man through drugs, alcoholism, and sexuality, which, in his despair, lead to evil.

Relations among States and economic blocs are unequal, and reforms cannot be proposed in the present unjust economic world order. Blatant interference in the internal policy of other States has been observed, showing disdain for their sovereignty. Today the voices of the third-world countries can scarcely be heard because they are not given answers to their request that science, technology and the financial resources that are squandered be dedicated to the development of the world.

Decades have gone by in which the attention of the United Nations has been turned towards world disarmament, in order to guarantee international peace and security when, to this end, we must ensure the freedom and dignity of man, as well as his material and moral well-being.

Let us make the United Nations more realistic and change the attitudes that contradict the spirit of its Magna Carta. We must replace interference in the internal affairs of other countries with respect for the freedom, independence and sovereignty of other States. No one is the policeman of the other. Let us substitute the intolerance and superiority or inferiority complexes in our relations with dialogue, understanding and love. Let us replace the present mechanisms that strangle our relations with other mechanisms that involve more equality, reduce dependence and promote the interdependence of States.

There is no one who can better fulfil the obligations imposed by the Charter than us, because we have all learned the lesson — but do not practise it in the proper way. However, some wish to put themselves forward as the best defenders of human rights and as exemplary democrats. No one is against human rights or democracy because these principles do not harm anyone. Human rights and democracy must be the result of natural and orderly development in each society, which must conform to the morality or the cultural heritage of each nation. Democracy and human rights should not become a passport for legalizing interference in the internal policy of other States.

Democracy and human rights are difficult to apply in underdeveloped societies which suffer from poverty, hunger and illiteracy. In short, the phrase "United Nations" exhorts us to unity, solidarity, mutual and sincere support, and not to confrontation or distrust.

While presenting the congratulations of the people of Equatorial Guinea to the international community, which today celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, I cherish the hope that the present session of the General Assembly will herald new moves to strengthen the role of our Organization to create a better world with greater prosperity and solidarity.

14. The Union of Myanmar

Address by

H.E. General Maung Aye, Vice-Chairman of the State Law and Order Restoration Council

It gives me great pleasure to address this fiftieth anniversary Special Commemorative Meeting of the United Nations. I would like to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral on his election to the high office of President of the General Assembly. On this historic occasion, I wish to pay a special tribute to the successive Secretaries-General for their selfless efforts to promote international peace and security and the well-being of the peoples of the world. I would also like to express our appreciation to the dedicated men and women who have contributed to the cause of the United Nations.

Anniversaries offer not only occasion for celebration but also provide opportunity for reflection. This fiftieth anniversary marks a unique opportunity to review the achievements as well as the limitations of the United Nations. The new international situation in which we now find ourselves makes it all the more urgent to strengthen the Organization to meet the evolving challenges and problems.

The international community has changed considerably in the past 50 years; yet the Charter of the United Nations framed in June 1945 continues to be valid to this day. The principles enshrined in the Charter — the equality of sovereign States, territorial integrity, the political independence of States and the peaceful resolution of conflicts — must remain inviolate and be faithfully observed in international relations. Erosion of these fundamental principles will undermine the aims and purposes of the Organization. Any attempt to weaken the time-honoured and universally accepted principles of sovereignty, of non-interference in the internal affairs of States and of self-determination would be cause for serious concern. In the process of restructuring the United Nations, utmost care must be taken to ensure that the effectiveness of the Organization will be preserved and strengthened. It must not be allowed to become a tool of a few to impose their agenda on the international community.

As responsible Members of the United Nations we pledge ourselves to cooperate with the Organization to maintain international peace and security. We recognize that the security of each and every Member State is important. Seen from our perspective, security entails non-interference in internal affairs and freedom from external pressures. Security is synonymous with the basic right freely to choose one's own political, economic and social systems and to determine one's future at one's pace and in accordance with cherished values and ideals. Only strict adherence to the fundamental principles of the Charter can assure nations of their security.

Myanmar fully subscribes to the purposes and principles of the Charter. We are of the view that the United Nations must remain the central element of the evolving international order. Notwithstanding its imperfections, the United Nations as a global organization represents the aspirations of the peoples of the world to a better tomorrow. It has generated in the people of Myanmar a sense of belonging to the global community. Myanmar attaches particular importance to the celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. A high-level National Committee established to coordinate commemorative celebrations on a national scale has been active throughout the year.

The United Nations today stands at a crossroads. Voices are being raised questioning the effectiveness of the Organization. The United Nations needs strong support and understanding if it is to weather the political and economic storms that batter and erode its foundations. There is no better alternative to the United Nations. In an increasingly interdependent world, the United Nations is the only forum for increased multilateral cooperation.

The anniversary is an opportune moment to rededicate ourselves to the purposes and principles of the Charter and to the spirit of the theme of the fiftieth anniversary, "We the peoples of the United Nations ... united for a better world". I would like to reaffirm Myanmar's abiding faith in the United Nations as a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of universal peace and cooperation. I have come here to renew Myanmar's commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter and to pledge Myanmar's continued cooperation with the United Nations.

I deem it appropriate to conclude my address with a quotation from the preamble of the Charter of the United Nations which advises us all

> "to practise tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours".

15. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Address by
H.E. The Right Honourable John Major, MP, Prime Minister
and First Lord of the Treasury

The United Kingdom was present at the birth of the United Nations. Throughout its 50 years we have stood by the Organization and by our responsibilities in the Security Council. The United Kingdom today as we meet here is the largest contributor of troops to United Nations peace-keeping operations. British forces are serving in blue berets from Angola to Georgia, with over 8,000 British troops in Bosnia alone. So I speak to you this morning as a strong supporter of the United Nations, but also as a candid friend. I want the United Nations to be more successful in the future. It will be needed in tomorrow's world, and so change is necessary.

The General Assembly first met amid the rubble and gloom of war-damaged London. But since then the world has been transformed. The United Nations has grappled with aggression. It has helped either to make or to keep the peace. It has worked for arms control, and only days ago the United Kingdom, France and the United States agreed to sign the Protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga. An end to nuclear testing is now in sight as we move towards a comprehensive test-ban treaty in 1996.

Throughout the past 50 years the principles of the Charter have stood the test of time. But now I believe we need to look ahead. The world is changing, and I believe it is time for the United Nations to change with it. We need to confront challenges to peace and deal more effectively with the roots of crises. We need to encourage democratic and accountable government and protect the rights of the individual. We need to reduce poverty and protect the environment, and we need to tackle the evils of international crime, drug trafficking and terrorism.

That is a demanding agenda. To achieve it, we need a properly financed and efficient United Nations. I want change because I want the United Nations to succeed. Let me emphasize that point: I want change so that the United Nations can succeed. Some reforms have begun; many are needed. What is clear is that inaction is no longer an option. The threat to the future of the United Nations will not come from change: it will come from inertia.

There are questions that we must address: Is the United Nations spread too wide? I believe it is. Is there too much waste and duplication between different bodies? I believe there may be. Are the priorities right for the 1990s?

I am not convinced yet that they are. As we form new bodies for new problems, do we close down those no longer needed? Not enough, I think — there are some bodies we could usefully scrap. Can we improve the planning, managing and financing of peace-keeping? I believe that we can. Is our machinery for preempting conflicts and disasters as good as it should be? I believe not.

There are other questions as well: Should the Security Council be enlarged? I believe that it should. The subject has been on the agenda for too long. It raises difficult questions, but the issues are clear and the decisions are needed.

Is the United Nations being efficiently managed? I am sure more could yet be done to apply the best modern practices, with funding allocated to the most efficient programmes.

Is perhaps too much time and energy being spent on ritual verbal battles brilliantly interpreted into six languages and then printed on the world's highest paper mountain? Of course it is — we know that is the case.

Last, but most urgent of all, financial reform. The United Nations is in a financial crisis. It is not sustainable for Member States to enjoy representation without taxation. Contributions should be paid promptly and in full, and arrears should be cleared. But this must be accompanied by a new focus on efficiency, and by modernizing assessment to reflect the changing capacity of Members to pay their dues.

I agree very strongly with the Secretary-General that we should have a special session of the General Assembly next year to address these issues.

I ask these questions because they need answers. I dare say some of them are controversial, but we need frank and honest answers now because the world needs the United Nations as much today as at any time in the past; but a United Nations that works; a United Nations using today's methods to address tomorrow's needs; a United Nations that shows its worth to the taxpayer in all our countries, for it is they who pay the subscriptions to the United Nations.

In that way I believe we can capture and can justify popular support for our Organization.

Today we face difficulties that we must overcome. At this commemoration, my hope is that we will find the will to do so.

16. The Kingdom of Nepal

Address by
H.E. The Right Honourable Sher Bahadur Deuba,
Prime Minister

To this great assembly of Heads of State and Government, the Secretary-General, distinguished representatives and to you, Mr. President, I bring the greetings of the Government and people of Nepal, as well as the best wishes of His Majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev for the success of the fiftieth anniversary session of the United Nations.

On this historic occasion, allow me first of all to reiterate my country's deep and abiding commitment to the principles and purposes enshrined in the United Nations Charter, whose ideals of peace, justice and progress continue to sustain the hopes of humanity. For a country which is the birthplace of the Buddha, the foremost of the apostles of peace and non-violence for over two and half millenniums, these ideals, together with the concept of tolerance, understanding and equality, are values which are rooted deep in our national psyche and culture. It is a tribute to the vision of the founding fathers of our Organization that the seminal ideas which have guided the United Nations in its first half-century should also prepare us for its second.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of our Organization has been its ability to adapt to the changing conditions and work towards its goals even in the face of an inhospitable international environment. As a result, there is greater room for hope in the world today. The spectre of a global nuclear catastrophe which has haunted humanity since 1945 is less threatening now with the end of the cold war. The abhorrent practice of colonialism that once justified the subjugation of nations and peoples is no longer acceptable. The novel concepts of preventive diplomacy and international peace-keeping introduced by the United Nations have helped defuse international crisis situations and prepare the groundwork for peacemaking, the rewards of which are becoming increasingly visible in the once conflict-prone regions of the globe. Similarly, the Organization's functional approach to peace has provided economic relief to the less privileged regions of the world and restored human dignity to the neglected segments of our global society.

As we seek solace in these achievements during the Special Commemorative Meeting, we would not be casting aspersions on the abilities of the United Nations by suggesting that much more needs to be done as we approach the dawn of the next century. While we are currently caught in a dilemma between our efforts to forge a new world order and face the reality of global disorder, there is a strong need to reinforce some of its mechanisms to cope with the demanding times. These relate to expansion of the Security Council, a more efficient management of the Secretariat, and greater democratization of international relations by extending the authority of the General Assembly, truly the representative body of the United Nations.

There is also an equally palpable need to better coordinate the activities between our Organization and its programmes, funds, the specialized agencies and other international development institutions, particularly with an eye towards enhancing the role of grass-root movements and citizen groups. Lately these movements, focusing on social, gender, population, environment and human rights issues, have not only become a strong international force in their own right, but have also been justified in expecting more from this global institution. For its part, Nepal will support a coordinated examination of studies aimed at strengthening the Organization, particularly those measures which also seek to free it from the vagaries of its insecure financial base.

Ever since Nepal joined the United Nations, it has supported and participated actively in the peace-keeping and peace-building efforts of the Organization. Our efforts in this direction will continue as we look forward to participating in the new initiative for a stand-by United Nations force designed to enable it to respond to any call for assistance in time.

Nepal sees no substitute for a United Nations that is both robust in standing and responsive to the needs of global security and the progress of its individual member nations. With the current preoccupation of the Organization in many new civil and regional conflicts, its activities on the development side have been weakened. The much-talked-about peace dividend in a post-cold-war era has proved so far to be elusive, as the condition of the least developed and land-locked countries continues to decline. It would be unfortunate if things were to be left in their present state, especially when the developing countries with their weak economic base have to cater to the dictates of market mechanisms alone.

Today, nations seek social and economic development within a framework of political freedom and justice in which the rights of individuals to live in dignity are respected. It is therefore not enough for Governments to pay lip service to these principles: they have to deliver the goods to the people by lifting them up from dire economic conditions and providing them with political stability to enjoy the fruits of freedom and prosperity.

The United Nations exemplifies a global dream and has no peer in matching the aspirations of men and women everywhere. It is a dream of a world in which the strong and the well-to-do are comfortable with their power and seek to act with confidence and magnanimity. It is a dream in which the

weak and the less fortunate can feel secure when seeking to work for greater international harmony. For this collective vision of our world, we in Nepal continue to remain committed to the ideals of the United Nations.

The Commonwealth of the Bahamas

Address by
H.E. The Honourable Hubert A. Ingraham, MP,
Prime Minister

We are now 50 years removed from that historic day when nations assembled for the purpose of uniting to address concerns over the human condition. Half a century later, we are presented with an appropriate opportunity to examine how well the United Nations has fulfilled its purpose.

In its 50 years, the United Nations has gained vast experience in virtually every field known to man, and its storehouse has served well those nations whose needs and desires fall within the parameters of the common programme of purposes and principles enshrined in its Charter.

Our theme, "We the Peoples of the United Nations ... United for a Better World", emphasizes that people, and the human condition, remain the highest priority of our civilization.

The Bahamas feels honoured to be an integral, contributing and well-served Member of the United Nations. For our part, we would wish for all of our sister States to enjoy, as we have been privileged to do, a strong commitment to parliamentary democracy and freedom from strife, tyranny and genocide. We further wish for all Members of this Organization to enjoy freedom from the social ills of abject poverty, disease and unemployment, upon which distress is wont to feed.

The United Nations was born out of the ruins of war and the determination of the great Powers of the day to insulate the world against a repetition of the disregard for life and property resulting from two world wars in the first half of this century. Fifty years later, the world is a very different place. The great Powers of 1945 have been joined in economic stature by new countries, including the vanquished of the world wars and other States, some of which had not come to political maturity in 1945.

Today we are threatened more by regional conflict than by global confrontation, and frequently the threats do not come from sovereign States but, instead, from religious and racial intolerance, ethnic hatred, international criminal cartels, natural disasters and development gone awry.

Indeed, as we celebrate our fiftieth anniversary, we must face squarely the threat of a new great war in which we are all engaged. The war of which I speak is that which is being fought in defence of the environment. This is of particular concern to small island developing States such as the Bahamas, a fragile, service-based, archipelagic ecosystem of global environmental significance.

It is useful to articulate the many achievements for which the United Nations has been responsible. Notable are the tremendous advances made in world health, including immunization and disease reduction, improved food production and delivery, improved shelter and general living standards for the poor and higher literacy rates in the world. Notable too, are initiatives to safeguard and promote the rights of women and children.

In our region, where the nefarious traffic in illicit drugs and the insidious erosion of society by powerful drug cartels are well known, we fully appreciate the importance of the United Nations role in galvanizing wide international support for the fight against the demons of avarice and death.

In supporting democracy, political freedom and respect for human rights, the United Nations has become the champion of millions of people everywhere. The democratization of Haiti and the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa are not only notable triumphs of the human spirit, but also testimony to this Organization's success in positively influencing even seemingly intractable internal crises in individual Member States.

Where terrorism, tyranny and genocide have been perpetrated against individuals, States and Governments, the United Nations has strengthened its resolve to take positive action. Permit me here to express special appreciation for the Blue Helmets and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Their untiring efforts to meet the urgent needs created by political persecution, civil war and regional conflict have been phenomenal. Today, greater and greater numbers of people are being displaced by famine, natural disasters and economic hardship, creating severe strains on the resources of receiving States, such as the Bahamas. It is appropriate — and I so recommend — that this body revisit the mandate of UNHCR with a view to providing assistance to those affected by these agents of displacement and misery.

The Bahamas is pleased to reiterate its commitment to the further strengthening of this Organization. It is our desire that the next five decades bear the fruit of our theme today: "We the Peoples of the United Nations ... United for a Better World". And in that regard, we hope for a world freed from the scourge of illicit drug traffic, relieved of the burdens created by uncontrolled migration, protected by greater environmental consciousness, enhanced through increased literacy and health standards everywhere, strengthened by Member States that fully honour their financial obligations to this body, encouraged that each organ and Member of this Organization will strengthen its symbiotic relationship for the benefit of mankind everywhere and, finally, we hope for a world liberated from poverty, disease, unemployment, racism, religious persecution, tyranny and strife.

The People's Republic of Bangladesh

Address by
H.E. Begum Khaleda Zia, Prime Minister

[*Delivered in Bengali; English text provided by the delegation*]

The United Nations has turned fifty. We are celebrating this landmark anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter to reaffirm its goals and rekindle its ideals.

As we observe this anniversary, we may pause to reflect on the circumstances in which this august body was founded after a terrible world war in the middle of this century. The goal was "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war", to enable mankind to live in peace and security with the common aim of striving for development and progress. The United Nations has had its share of successes and failures, but, there can be no thought of abandoning it because there is no alternative.

Our commitment to the United Nations is unswerving. We have always upheld and resolutely pursued the United Nations mandate for peace and development. As we salute the United Nations flag and pay tribute to those who wear the blue helmets of peace-keepers throughout the world, we take great pride in our record of being among the foremost troop-contributors dispersed over many conflict areas. We are ready to serve the United Nations cause through standby forces closely linked to both early-warning and preventive systems.

Bangladesh fully supports the reforms and restructuring of the main organ of the United Nations. I feel it is indeed ironic that when so many world leaders have gathered to solemnly pledge their commitment to the Charter of the United Nations, when it comes to making crucial decisions affecting the destiny of mankind, such decisions are made by a handful of countries.

Strengthening the rule of law is critical to preserving the security of smaller and weaker States. The enhanced role and contribution of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) thus assumes greater relevance. Measures for compulsory jurisdiction or arbitration through the ICJ or third-party mediation are therefore important.

While we are assembled here to celebrate the founding of this august body, over 40 million people in my country are facing poverty and destruction owing to deprivation of our rightful share of the waters of the Ganges River by India through unilateral withdrawal at Farakka. While withdrawal of water during the dry season causes serious drought, the release of excess water during the rainy season creates severe floods in a vast area of Bangladesh. Besides the colossal loss in economic terms, this is causing serious degradation to the environment and to the ecology.

The Farakka Barrage has become an issue of life and death for us. Owing to obstruction of the natural flow of water upstream, a process of desertification is evident throughout the northern and western parts of Bangladesh. Vegetation is dwindling, salinity is spreading in the south, threatening industry and agriculture with ruin. Fish and animal resources are facing extinction. Innumerable people of various occupations who depended on the River Padma for their living are becoming unemployed. Many are being uprooted from their homes and hearths. As the whole world voices concern for the protection of the environment and human rights, at that very moment a big part of the population of Bangladesh is being pushed over to the threshold of poverty and destruction. This is a gross violation of human rights and justice.

I had mentioned this acute problem before this world body in 1993. Unfortunately, in spite of our best efforts, the problem still remains unresolved. I would like to call upon all of you gathered here today to help resolve this problem.

If we look around the world today at the numerous conflicts, big and small, at aggressions perpetrated against small States, at genocidal conflicts and "ethnic cleansing", and denial of the right of lower riparian countries to the water of common rivers, there are many who may question the justification of this world body.

Despite these drawbacks, mankind has not been able to evolve a more effective forum. The fiftieth anniversary offers the ideal opportunity to review its achievements and to look forward — to look forward to a strengthened and reinvigorated United Nations, a United Nations that has been restructured, attuned and democratized to meet the challenges of the next millennium.

19. The Federal Republic of Germany

Address by
H.E. Dr. Klaus Kinkel, Vice-Chancellor and Minister
for Foreign Affairs

[Delivered in German; English text provided by the delegation]

Fifty years ago, delegates from 51 nations, meeting in San Francisco to found the United Nations, gave the world a portent of reason, solidarity and hope. That same portent brings us together here today.

In looking back we have to admit that, unfortunately, history does not always follow the straight paths of reason, but it does give us opportunities for progress which sometimes border on the miraculous.

One such unique gift was the removal of the Berlin Wall and the barbed wire in Germany and throughout Europe. The ending of the East-West conflict freed the world from the fear of a nuclear inferno. It has relieved us of the burden of the arms race and given all nations new opportunities — for self-determination, peaceful cooperation and a sustainable global economic development. Yet many of the renewed hopes of peace attaching to those opportunities are still unfulfilled. Above all, we have been unable to bridge the gap between North and South, between rich and poor.

Today, on the threshold of a new millennium, we must learn the right lessons from the experiences gained over the last 50 years. We cannot change what lies behind us, but we can do better in the future. We must influence and shape what lies ahead. What is the challenge we are facing? Nothing less than to keep the Earth habitable for our children and grandchildren; to make sure that eight or ten billion people can live in humane conditions.

The German astronaut Thomas Reiter and his Russian colleague went for a five-hour-long walk in space last weekend. "The Earth is incredibly beautiful", both of them said after their walk. And I believe that it is our responsibility to see to it that the Earth continues to be incredibly beautiful.

Never was it so abundantly clear that the only choice open to mankind is to succeed together or to fail together. And that is why we must renew and strengthen the covenant of San Francisco, the covenant for peace, human rights and development, for the joint survival of the human race.

Only if it charts its course by this compass will mankind be able to survive. For the world, the United Nations is without alternative. That is the truly important fact we have to grasp in the world Organization's jubilee year. Only then will we also muster the strength to carry out the necessary reforms. These reforms will have to succeed now. The United Nations must overcome its financial and structural crisis. However, if it is to do so it needs our support, and not just destructive criticism.

Let us settle our conflicts peacefully. Peace must finally be restored to the former Yugoslavia. Let us scrap and destroy weapons of mass destruction and other weapons, such as anti-personnel mines, which, day in and day out, kill or maim innocent civilians, including, unfortunately, many women and children.

We must not allow people to be murdered, tortured, violated or persecuted and expelled on grounds of race, faith or political conviction.

Let us combine our strength for the economic and social progress of the nations in a new partnership for development. Children all over the world must be immunized against disease, and they should be able to attend school. Let us protect the Earth, the oceans and the rivers from pollution.

Finally, let us pay our contributions, without which the United Nations cannot perform its vital functions. Here I should like expressly to welcome what President Clinton of the United States and others said yesterday on this subject.

Since the Second World War Germany has pursued the cause of peace and human rights. We have tied our destiny to that of a united Europe and have participated in the global campaign against poverty and underdevelopment. The ending of the East-West conflict brought us the unique gift of reunification. This imposes upon us a special responsibility for the concerns of the world Organization.

The United Nations can continue to count on Germany.

20. The Republic of Benin

Address by
H.E. Mr. Désiré Vieyra, Minister of State for Coordination of Government Action

[*Delivered in French*]

It is a great pleasure for me to participate in this Special Commemorative Meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, and to express the appreciation of the people and Government of Benin to those men and women whose historic vision made it possible, through the creation of the United Nations, to lay the foundations for the international legal order on 26 June 1945 in San Francisco.

This is a fitting time to pay a well-deserved tribute to successive Secretaries-General, whose determination and dedication to the cause of peace and the progress of humanity have contributed to the triumph of noble ideas, and to all the Secretariat staff for their commitment and dynamism.

I particularly wish to congratulate Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the first son of the African continent to occupy the position, both exacting and exciting, of Secretary-General, for his courage and his humanism, which have commanded the admiration of all.

In Benin, where the values of democracy and political pluralism have prevailed since 1990, we have accorded this event all the importance that it merits, taking into account the hopes that the peoples of the whole world place in the capacity of the United Nations to meet the major challenges confronting humanity. For us, this celebration is an opportunity, above and beyond the festivities and the various events, to evaluate the 50 years of operations of the United Nations, with a view to making it more useful and more effective.

In spite of the long period of tension and the global rivalries of the cold war — fortunately a thing of the past — the universal Organization has stood the test of time and, during this turbulent century, has been able to take significant initiatives. States continue to exchange views on very diverse questions involving all sectors of human activity.

The United Nations, as it reaches the half-century mark, must commit itself with resolve to the fight against poverty. In this respect, we cannot fail to be pleased that at the World Summit for Social Development we finally overturned a sacrosanct principle to the effect that a country's social action must be determined by its economy. We shall now base our economies on the social sphere.

In this respect, I am gratified at the proclamation of 1996 as International Year for the Eradication of Poverty. Today Benin is striving, with the help of its development partners, to reduce the rate of infant and maternal mortality and to reduce illiteracy by placing particular emphasis on health and education.

In order that the United Nations may always be able to serve the peoples of the world, and in order that lasting peace may be achieved, we must strengthen the Organization's capacities with regard to the prevention of conflicts, the maintenance and strengthening of peace, and we must provide it with the means to accomplish its mission. In my view, the action of our Governments cannot succeed without the support of all the members of the international community, including civil society, the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

We must also support the vital role of the United Nations in mobilizing support for the well-being of humanity. It is especially in our interest to enable the Organization effectively to tackle the specific problems of the developing countries — in particular, those of Africa and the least-developed countries, whose recovery requires substantial efforts and resources.

Indeed, Africa, in spite of its human resources and its immense economic potential, is undermined and ruined by different afflictions. It was in recognition of the magnitude of the challenges to be met, both individually and collectively, that the Organization of African Unity adopted at Abuja the resolution that was to lead to the establishment of the African Economic Community, with a view to the integration of members' fragile national economies. This resolution cannot be implemented successfully without the unfailing support of the United Nations.

To speed up the development of that continent, so many times plundered and pillaged, there is a need to establish without delay the sort of Marshall Plan for which the Heads of certain African States, with Benin in the lead, are constantly calling. I believe that this plan should be the culmination of a series of measures to be taken by the international community with a view to ensuring not only that the commitments regarding Africa made in the framework of summits and conferences organized by the United Nations since the beginning of this decade are respected, but also that the Agenda for Development is implemented.

In 1945, Franklin Delano Roosevelt told his colleagues:

> "Friends, our goal is peace — not only the end of this war, but the end of all wartime."

The world has certainly evolved, but the United Nations Charter has lost none of its timeliness. We therefore remain confident in the Organization's capacity to realize the aspirations of all peoples to a world of solidarity, justice and peace.

21. Malaysia

Address by
H.E. Datuk Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi,
Minister for Foreign Affairs

The United Nations is 50 today, yet it remains an Organization beset with problems, both substantive and organizational. The United Nations has achieved much in the past, but confidence has waned in recent years in its ability to discharge its functions as mandated by its Charter.

If the United Nations is to proceed into the next millennium and remain relevant to the needs of its Members and the international community, and if it is to address in a comprehensive manner all issues relating to war and peace, economic growth and responsible governance, then restoring confidence in itself and rebuilding its image must remain its priority task and responsibility. While it is our right to expect the United Nations to achieve this objective, giving support and commitment to the United Nations must be our unshirkable responsibility.

Malaysia strongly believes that the United Nations should be the body to promote globalism and pluralism. It must stand clearly on the side of universal values in combating genocide and aggression. As the world approaches the next millennium, the United Nations must continue humanity's struggle against the elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. Nuclear testing, above all, must cease immediately.

Peace and security cannot be built on arms reduction alone. Development focused on the eradication of poverty and the removal of bottlenecks towards global prosperity must remain the priority task and responsibility of the United Nations. In this role, the United Nations should not become an instrument for disciplining developing countries while allowing for power politics and global domination by a few powerful countries.

The buzz word during the general debate at the fiftieth session of the General Assembly and at this meeting since yesterday has been "reform", with the focus on the reform of the United Nations. In our view, there is a need for a comprehensive agenda for the reform of the multilateral system. Indeed, it is time for us to forge a new framework for multilateralism for the twenty-first century. This agenda should encompass the principal organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council and the International Court of Justice, as well as the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization.

The agenda must also acknowledge the important role and contribution of science and technology, the business sector and the non-governmental organizations. They have enriched multilateralism, contributed to the maintenance of international peace and security, and promoted the economic and social advancement of all peoples.

Scientists and businessmen have made immense contributions to the emergence of a global village. They have set up a network, a super-information highway, and facilitated financial and trade flows, which have made borders porous. As the scientists lead us into the era of cyberspace, we need to put in place a code of conduct that would regulate the flow of information. The United Nations must be in the forefront of cooperation in cyberspace to ensure the full involvement of the international community.

Yet, at the same time, the current activities of the United Nations have suffered as a result of financial constraints. The financial constraints have set in motion an exercise drastically to reduce expenditure on development in an arbitrary and rushed manner. While we welcome the convening of an emergency special session to address this issue, we would appeal to all Member States to honour their commitments by paying their subscriptions in full and on time.

In order to achieve these objectives, appropriate institutional changes are required. These include, first, the democratization of the Security Council through the expansion of its membership and a review of the veto with a view to its total elimination. Secondly, the General Assembly should play its rightful role as a forum in which sovereign equality prevails, including providing policy guidance to the Security Council. The Trusteeship Council could be disbanded. Thirdly, the Bretton Woods Institutions should return to their original mandates and take on board the new Powers on the geo-economic scene. Fourthly, the International Court of Justice should be revitalized with changes in its composition, including the discontinuation of allotting automatic seats to the veto-wielding Powers.

While countries recognize the reality of power politics and their application, particularly in the bilateral context, the reformed and restructured United Nations must no longer be the tool of any one country, irrespective of its power. Humanity must find succour and sustenance in this global institution, which must become the true vehicle for the promotion of multilateralism.

22. The Arab Republic of Egypt

Address by
H.E. Mr. Amre Moussa, Minister for Foreign Affairs
and Special Envoy of the President

[Delivered in Arabic]

I have the honour to make the following statement on behalf of President Hosni Mubarak, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

Fifty years ago, Egypt joined 50 other countries in witnessing the birth of the United Nations which was the birth of a new international order that was to be founded on the principles and the goals enshrined in the Charter we signed in San Francisco. One of the most important goals of that new international order was to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, in the wake of the horrors of the Second World War. It also aimed at achieving justice, equality, economic prosperity, social advancement and the protection of the sovereignty of States, as well as the realization of the aspirations of peoples after freedom and self-determination.

Today, we are gathered together here to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. This is a unique opportunity to assess our successes and our failures and to glean from our experiences the object-lessons which would shed light on the reasons behind such successes and failures and, thereby, help us chart, together, the road to the future.

The very preservation within the realm of the possible, of the principles and goals of the United Nations Charter was an achievement unto itself. The Charter remains today — as it has been throughout the past 50 years — true to its goals, lofty in its expression and clear in its principles. To the credit of this Organization is that it has been a source of hope, a torch-bearer and an element of construction.

On the basis of the Charter and within the framework of the United Nations, we have brought about decolonization and put an end to racial discrimination in its most brutal form, apartheid. We have been able to promote new theories for economic and social development and initiate international specialized action in a varied range of fields, such as agriculture, industry, science, health, the environment and many others. Together, we have started to organize international activities on land, in the air and at sea.

So, let us not be unfair in our assessment of the past 50 years. Much has been achieved.

However, the bright image is overshadowed by dark and murky clouds, the most ironic of which is that the United Nations stands on the verge of bankruptcy even as we celebrate its fiftieth anniversary.

However, this alone is not where the tragedy lies. The real tragedy is that despite our success in achieving decolonization, hegemony and policies of aggression continue to afflict the international scene. Despite our success in ending apartheid, racial discrimination and religious intolerance are still rife in many parts of the world. Despite our success in promoting many theories for development, economic imbalances persist due to the widening gap between North and South — a gap that portends the division of the world, for decades to come, into rich and poor, thus entailing migration, discrimination, terrorism, social ills, and a myriad of other adverse political effects. Despite our success in establishing political and security frameworks on the international and regional levels, to deal with issues such as disarmament and human rights, we still suffer from the proliferation of nuclear weapons and persistence in nuclear practices on the one hand, as well as from the lack of resolve when it comes to dealing with human rights, on the other hand. In fact, it is in these two areas specifically — nuclear disarmament and human rights — that serious political imbalances appear in the present and the emerging world orders alike. Very succinctly, we can put this down to the existence of double standards.

Such political and economic imbalances have led to a social imbalance that, undoubtedly, will lead, at the international level, to psychological aberrations that will impact negatively on future generations the world over.

While we celebrate 50 years of the world order that was established in the aftermath of World War Two and move closer to the beginning of the twenty-first century, mankind is sitting atop a volcano that is beginning to spew its lava.

Nevertheless, let us not slide into the quagmire of despair. Let us not waste our scientific achievements by our political misconduct. Let us build up the credibility of the international order, in a manner that instills confidence amongst people. When we speak of peace, let us truly mean peace; when we speak of development, let us put it into effect; when we talk about human rights, let us refrain from resorting to double standards; and, when we speak of disarmament, let us do so without excepting anyone.

As we look to the future, let us arm ourselves with courage, with integrity and with fair play; let us free ourselves from double standards and from bias. As we celebrate the United Nations fiftieth anniversary, let us not blow out any candles, but light candles so that they may illuminate our path in these murky and dangerous times and enable us to reach the prosperous and stable future in which peace may reign supreme.

23. The Republic of Nicaragua

Address by
H.E. Mr. Ernesto Leal, Minister for Foreign Affairs

[*Delivered in Spanish*]

The United Nations emerged 50 years ago from the rubble of the Second World War. On this fiftieth anniversary we must strive for the resurgence of a renewed United Nations, with its principal aim, which is "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war", as stated in the Charter — but its principal aim should also be to contribute to development, to eradicate the poverty that affects many of our countries.

This Commemorative Meeting should not be simply one more anniversary of our Organization. It must mark an important step in the history of mankind. Anniversaries can be nothing more than commemorative dates if we do not do something concrete that would truly measure up to our own aspirations.

We should therefore, on this occasion, make a solid commitment to consolidate peace. I therefore wish, in this forum which has so often witnessed the horrors of war and human suffering, to make an appeal for the cessation of all international conflicts and controversies both current and potential.

A new era of peace in the world demands the development of a United Nations plan of action, with the full participation of the Secretary-General, aimed especially at promoting a peaceful solution to all of the controversies and differences that still persist and that can affect international peace or security. Every conflict resolved in the world will be a victory for peace.

The best tribute that we can pay to the United Nations Decade for International Law is to arrive at the centennial of the 1899 Peace Conference in The Hague, where the Convention for the Peaceful Settlement of International Conflicts of 1899 was agreed with a humanity in which dialogue will have prevailed over differences. All States Members of the United Nations must work for a humanity free of disputes or conflicts so that we can arrive at that third peace conference — which was referred to and proposed yesterday by the President of the Russian Federation — free of disputes, free of conflicts — so that we may enter the twenty-first century as the century of peace.

The time has also come to faithfully fulfil the commitment established in the Charter to promote the economic and social advancement of all peoples. We must, therefore, begin the United Nations' largest peace-keeping operation, that is, placing the human being at the centre of economic and social development. I wish also to call for a re-orientation of the structures of the United Nations towards the topic referred to yesterday by the Prime Minister of Japan — the subject of human security.

Development should be the other phase of the work of the next 50 years of the United Nations — a United Nations that looks towards the South, which is still poor and without resources, so the twenty-first century may also become the century of development. We face the great challenge of turning into reality the results of the world conferences on children, the environment, social development, population, human rights and women.

Like the United Nations, Nicaragua too, with the invaluable support of this Organization, has emerged from the ashes of war. Today we are advancing successfully towards a new order of democracy and freedom in a spirit of national reconciliation. In that context, we have already requested the United Nations to observe the election that will take place next year in Nicaragua.

Nicaragua is also resolved to continue to participate in the decision-making process in the United Nations, which will define the direction of the Organization. Democracy is today a universal value that should guide our agenda permanently. We must be aware that without freedom, nothing will be possible.

Lastly, I believe that this fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is the appropriate time for us to reaffirm our active commitment to the Charter of the Organization, for us to work towards a United Nations that is efficient, renewed in its values and reformed in its structures. It is time for us to allocate, at last, the well-known "peace dividends" to the progress of the emerging democracies and least developed countries — time for us to strengthen democracy with the fruits of sustainable development and not to leave the new or restored democracies alone in their fragile process of transition. This is the time for us to make of the United Nations a place of true universal representation, without exclusions of any kind — for us to forge, not only a preventive diplomacy, but also a true preventive democracy, which could contribute to anticipating problems, eliminating poverty and strengthening democratic institutions, so that we can form a peace operation, but this time against terrorism and drug-trafficking.

I do not wish to conclude without reiterating that if we are able peacefully to resolve the disputes that still persist, and if we transform the United Nations into a great force for economic and social progress, we will have sealed for the twenty-first century the indivisible alliance between peace and development.

D. Statements delivered at the 38th plenary meeting held on 23 October 1995

1. The Kingdom of Swaziland

Address by
His Majesty King Mswati III, Head of State

I bring with me from the Kingdom of Swaziland the greetings and good wishes of Her Majesty and of the entire Swazi nation to all our friends and fellow members of the United Nations.

My task today is a very simple one: it is to declare my country's continuing commitment to the founding Charter of our Organization and to pledge our support to the United Nations and its agencies, through the provisions of the Declaration we shall be adopting.

This Declaration includes the original purposes and principles of our Organization and the same hopes and expectations of the founding leaders. For them, after the experience of two world wars, the idea of a world united in pursuit of peaceful development represented the best chance for humanity to focus its energy and resources, not on the futility of conflict, but on the necessities of survival.

Fifty years later, experience provides us with a clear image of our failures — as well as of our achievements — and requires of us that we learn from our mistakes and build on our successes. We have much to be proud of, and we honour particularly those whose lives have been dedicated and lost in the service of mankind.

Among those of us who have the privilege of addressing this historic gathering, I may, if God so wills, be one of the few who will be present when we commemorate our Organization's centenary, in the year 2045. I say this not out of pride, nor in the rashness of youth; I say this because today I stand before you, representing not only my country, but also the youth of the world and the generations still to come whose expectations and hopes for their own lives and for the future of mankind must form the focus for the United Nations in the next 50 years.

And what are those expectations, those hopes? I believe the United Nations founding fathers would have recognized their own goals in those of my generation. They are not too much to ask. They are, after all, what every human being has a right to expect — to have good health, shelter, security for one's family, to be free to pursue the ideas and beliefs of choice, to be educated and employed and, above all, to be able to live in peace on equal terms with one another and in harmony with all God's creations.

The Declaration we have before us, with its blueprint for the improved performance of the United Nations, represents our best chance to realize our people's dreams.

It requires of us, as Members of an Organization from which not one person or nation must feel excluded, to work together with a common purpose and to a collective set of priorities and principles.

We recognize the need for the United Nations and its agencies to have the structures and capacity to be able to work on our behalf with efficiency, transparency and accountability and always with an ear to the wishes of its membership.

The key decision-making bodies in which we place our trust must adapt in such a way that they truly represent all countries and arrive at conclusions that take into account the opinions and welfare of our peoples.

As Members, we must each of us recognize the responsibility we assume with our membership: to support our Organization, to respect one another's sovereignty, traditions and individuality; to implement the plans of action designed for our social, economic and political development and to abide by the principles of our founding Charter for the good of those whom we represent.

In the year 2045, I wish to be able to stand and meet the gaze of my children, and my grandchildren, and say, "We did our best". If we can all share this commitment to future generations — and if our Organization can adapt to the changing requirements of the times — then the world in 50 years' time will be a safer, happier place for all and we will have discharged our duty to our own peoples and to all mankind.

On behalf of the Kingdom of Swaziland, I do so commit myself and my people to the future of the United Nations in the belief that it is the one, global organization with the capacity and purpose to allow us to reach our goals.

The Republic of Ghana

Address by

H.E. Flt.-Lt. (Rtd.) Jerry John Rawlings, President

Today we acknowledge and applaud that powerful vision of the equal rights of nations, large and small, of men and women, and of freedom and justice enshrined in the noble Charter of the United Nations.

The Charter has given the post-war international community of States moral and legal bearings. It has expressed in unforgettable words, with irresistible logic, the principles on which a new, better world could be built, a world where tolerance and mutual respect would reign.

This fiftieth anniversary is indeed cause for celebration: United Nations membership has grown from 51 States to 185; the old colonial empires, as we all know, have been dismantled, even if new forms are emerging; the cold war may seem to be at an end, though many of us are still living with its very painful legacies; and issues of the environment, women and children, social development and population have been placed at the centre of the development agenda. Let me on this occasion pay tribute to the honourable lady from Tanzania, Mrs. Mongella, under whose leadership the Fourth World Conference on Women, in Beijing, successfully got its point across to the world. Today, we know that development means people and the quality of their lives, and not just statistical indices.

On this very important occasion, I salute the United Nations on your behalf, most of all for the millions who are healthier, safer and happier through one form of United Nations action or another. We must also salute the United Nations agencies for the millions of refugees worldwide who, but for the Organization, would have lost hope and even life itself. We must pay tribute to the United Nations for its peace-keeping efforts to stem human suffering. Finally, we must also pay tribute to the United Nations for the independence of many new States and for the end of apartheid rule, especially in South Africa.

In congratulating the United Nations, we are applauding ourselves. The Organization is very much us. It is the collective will of the international community of sovereign States, embodying our collective weaknesses as well. This fiftieth anniversary is therefore also a time for very sober reflection on our failures. Talking about our failures, I think it is also important that on this occasion, as we applaud ourselves for our successes, we must at the same time acknowledge that expressed in the many conflict situations in different parts of the world are very painful situations resulting in the loss of many lives.

Within this sober reflection, we must also admit failures that are manifested in the revival of genocide and in ethnic cleansing, blatantly practised in different guises around this globe of ours. These failures are shown on the distended stomachs of malnourished children all over the third world, and most especially on my continent, in Africa. For us in Africa particularly, the next 50 years will perhaps be even more crucial than the past 50 years. We want to see in the international community, and in the framework of the United Nations, a reversal of our continent's marginalization.

We cannot help being struck by the fact that the international community is willing to spend $5 million a day on United Nations peace-keeping operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina — and we do not begrudge those noble people such international solidarity; indeed, they deserve it — but when we have asked for a sum that represents 10 to 15 days of that bill to help those of us in Africa who are making every possible effort to assist ourselves with our meagre resources, there is a deafening silence. Should such double standards continue? This is the question I put before you. How long will world statesmen omit even a glancing reference to Africa as they survey the world scene, despite the numerous resources that she has provided to today's modern world?

Let us not forget that Africa's resources — as I have said, both human and material — have over the centuries made a very major contribution to the wealth of nations and to human progress. We must therefore denounce the selfishness that has the means and sees the other's needs, but refuses to meet them. We see the reckless over-consumption of some amid the wrenching, grinding poverty of so many. We feel the hunger in the midst of plenty, the want in the midst of so much abundance.

We must equally deplore the international focus on only what is negative about Africa and the indifference to the positive that also prevails on this continent: the images of starving children but not of new schools and clinics; the emphasis on failed policies but not on success stories that have been chalked up all over the continent, very often with the assistance of the developed community, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as well as the World Bank; and the focus on urban degradation but not on new industrial progress, which is another unfortunate misrepresentation of what is taking place on our continent.

Let us hope that the next 50 years of the United Nations will see the end of these double standards in our international affairs. As we salute the Organization's achievements and acknowledge its shortcomings, we must do everything possible to commit ourselves to reform and democratization within this august body. Let us together recapture that vision of the Organization's founding fathers and keep the hopes of millions alive. Let us, the trustees of that vision, turn our words into positive action for generations to come. Let us build a world in which the sense of internationalism that gave us this honourable Charter will carry us into a twenty-first century where right and not might will prevail; where justice will subdue injustice; and where the small and weak can safely live alongside the big and strong without feeling intimidated.

Let us remember that there can be no bright future for the world, no new international order that is sustainable, without Africa occupying a dignified place, her rightful place at the table of humanity and in the councils of global decision-making.

3. The Republic of Indonesia

Address by
H.E. Mr. Soeharto, President

[*Delivered in Bahasa Indonesian; English text provided by the delegation*]

I deem it a distinct privilege for me to participate, on behalf of the Government and people of Indonesia, in this historic commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is particularly significant to us in Indonesia, for this year we are also celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the proclamation of our independence. It is no coincidence that both the Charter of the United Nations and the Constitution of Indonesia embrace the same principles and objectives, both yearning for the universal peace that will come only when all humankind share the fruits of freedom and justice.

For Indonesia, the United Nations is an important forum for the fulfilment of our constitutional mandate to contribute to the eradication of colonialism, domination, poverty and injustice everywhere and to the shaping of a new international order. The United Nations has figured prominently in Indonesia's struggle to preserve its freedom.

The United Nations has played a crucial role in containing conflicts in various regions. To ensure peace in this post-cold war era, however, we need to enhance the capabilities of the United Nations through more effective global and regional mechanisms for peacemaking, peace-keeping and post-conflict peace-building, as well as preventive diplomacy.

On the whole, the United Nations and its specialized agencies have pursued an immense array of activities that touch every aspect of people's lives all over the world. It cannot, however, continue to carry them out with undiminished success and vigour while it totters on the brink of financial insolvency. This situation cannot go on indefinitely without adverse consequences to the world community.

Let this fiftieth anniversary of our Organization be an occasion for all of us to address this critical issue, as well as the issues relating to its reform, revitalization and democratization, so that it will be able to adapt to the challenges of our time.

Since the 1960s the United Nations has launched a series of international development strategies, but these have not been sufficient to redress the imbalances between the developed and the developing countries. The gap between them continues to widen. The developing countries remain marginalized from the world economic decision-making processes.

With the end of the cold war, there has been a new surge of interdependence and multilateralism, while the world economy has become increasingly globalized. The Non-Aligned Movement, at its Jakarta Summit in 1992, adopted a new approach and orientation and launched an initiative to once again engage the developed countries in a dialogue, based this time on mutual interests and benefits, equitably shared responsibility and genuine interdependence. It is our hope that the revival of this dialogue will be distinctly reflected in the Agenda for Development so that it will adequately complement the Agenda for Peace.

In these troubled times, we, the Governments and peoples of the world, look up to the United Nations for the sustenance of our hopes. There is no question but that we need the United Nations. What we often forget is that the United Nations needs us too. We applaud its triumphs, but we often forget that its failures are ours too. Its responsibility is our responsibility.

The United Nations has served us well over the past half century. However, we will never be able to realize the new international order of greater peace, social justice and common prosperity so long as the Organization is allowed to remain in the state that it is in today. We can reach that goal only after we have finally made the United Nations the effective instrument of peace that was envisaged 50 years ago.

4. The Federated States of Micronesia

Address by
H.E. Mr. Bailey Olter, President

I have the honour and privilege of bringing to this historic gathering the greetings and best wishes of all the people of the Federated States of Micronesia. The presence here of so many nations represented at the highest level is the greatest testament to the universality of the United Nations and provides us with a strong political foundation on which to chart our Organization's role for the next 50 years.

As other speakers have noted, this is a time not only for celebration, but also a time for reflection and assessment. As a people who have placed special reliance on the United Nations throughout its existence, Micronesians living today have always felt we were a part of the Organization even though we became a Member only a few years ago.

We will remain grateful to the members and staff of the Trusteeship Council and to the United States, as Trusteeship Administering Authority, for the roles they played in our progress towards self-determination and, finally, independence. It is fitting that just prior to this anniversary the Trusteeship Council completed its work. Thus, the successful discharge of its heavy assignment under the Charter is one of the accomplishments we rightly celebrate here today.

Today we also celebrate the fact that in the course of the past 50 years there has been a sharp decline in the practice of colonialism by the world's major Powers. But, unlike the experience with the Trusteeship system, the Charter has been less effective in bringing some nations to put aside their own self-interests and assign their colonial holdings to a rightful place in the history books. This unfortunate reality still affects the lives of thousands of people throughout the region of the Pacific Islands.

Because our region is distant from the homelands of the colonial Powers, it retains a certain usefulness to them for the disposal of their dangerous materials and for the conduct of tests and other practices too hazardous to carry out at home. Thus, on assertion of the sovereign rights of Governments half a world away, we, along with the colonial inhabitants, are forced to endure the consequences of these actions, consequences which will be felt for generations to come. This dampens our celebration today.

As we know, the Charter commits all Members to take separate and joint action to promote universal respect for, and observance of, human rights. This is closely related to broad obligations regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories. Sad to say, however, these goals of the Charter remain largely unrealized, despite dedicated and persistent efforts on the part of United Nations Members over many years. Indeed, brave people have laid down their lives in the service of the United Nations in pursuing these goals, and we honour them here. Their sacrifices are not in vain.

It is our hope that during the next 50 years strides can be made in achieving better harmony between the inevitable considerations of national self-interest and the legitimate rights and expectations of the less empowered people of the world. I fully realize that even today such a statement sounds idealistic, and that is the problem we face. Nevertheless, only in such a context can real life be breathed into sections of the Charter that have not been adequately addressed during the first 50 years.

The accomplishments of the United Nations up to now as a forum for the advancement of world peace and security cannot be minimized, and I salute those accomplishments while recognizing the work that remains. But this Organization has an even greater mission. As populations grow and make increasing demands on the limited resources of our planet, even the most richly endowed among us must come to understand the great, futuristic vision of the Charter. It wisely calls upon peoples and Governments large and small, rich and poor, to incorporate in their policies and actions true respect for the right of all, including the least privileged among us, to live in conditions of decency and equality.

This challenge is not only for the developed world, but applies equally to developing nations. It is not a simplistic call for more North/South assistance. Instead, it seeks a universal awakening to the single most important reality of our lives today. This reality is that all our interests become more closely linked with each passing generation. We all have responsibilities if we are to turn back the consequences of our past selfish behaviour. The destruction of war, the improper stewardship of our natural resources, the pollution of our living space, the diminishment of our biological diversity and the havoc we will wreak upon the very climate of our planet, will all combine to overwhelm the Earth's population unless we find common ground.

That common ground exists. It exists here. It does not ask us to surrender our nationhood or our culture. It is the Charter of the United Nations — a visionary document that has achieved much in its 50 years, and provides a format for our very survival. God grant that we will have the courage to build on it.

5.

The Republic of Cyprus

Address by
H.E. Mr. Glafcos Clerides, President

As we are commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, I consider it my solemn obligation to pay tribute, on behalf of the people and the Government of Cyprus, to the founders of our Organization, whose vision and determination made its creation possible, and to encourage and congratulate all of us who take part in this Organization.

The world Organization, born out of the ashes of the Second World War, has, despite the vicissitudes of the cold war and the present turbulent world situation, achieved admirable results. The vital issues of decolonization, peace-keeping, human rights, democratization, development and the codification of international law have been addressed with considerable success. On the other hand, efforts towards global peace and security, the primary responsibility of the United Nations, have had varied results. The much hoped-for peace dividend from the demise of the cold war, has unfortunately eluded us, and numerous ethnic conflicts exert, as a result, their daily heavy toll on human life and produce material losses.

At the same time, some long-standing problems, including the problem of the invasion and occupation of part of the territory of my country by Turkey, have remained unresolved for years.

Such situations give rise to questions regarding the validity of the United Nations Charter and the effectiveness of the Organization.

The United Nations Charter, a great human achievement, embodying the wisdom and vision of the drafters to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, constitutes the legal and moral foundation for international relations, and is as valid and relevant today as ever.

What is really needed is to reduce the gap between principle and practice created by the failure to apply objectively and universally the provisions of the Charter, thus causing insecurity, frustration and bitterness. It is also essential to uphold the authority of the Organization against those who flout international opinion as expressed in United Nations resolutions.

We are now witnessing the ever growing and dramatic direct engagement of the United Nations in the complex maintenance of international peace and security in our ever changing, interdependent world. Because of these challenges and those that lie ahead, we must deal on a priority basis with the very important issues of revitalizing, both financially and otherwise, reforming and strengthening our Organization so that it may become a more potent instrument in the service of mankind, in whose name it was created.

The human genius that was enlisted in the cause of peace immediately after the Second World War is called upon to face new challenges in the cause of peace, development and cooperation between nations.

Perhaps no tribute to our Organization would be more fitting than to recommit ourselves to the everlasting principles and ideals of the United Nations Charter and join in determined efforts, now and in the years that lie ahead, to invigorate both our institutions and our own resolve for the promotion of the universal aspirations for peace, justice and cooperation between the countries and peoples of the world.

The Republic of Cyprus pledges its determination to make every effort so that the activities of the United Nations will be further expanded, its principles and values universally applied and its resolutions fully complied with. We pledge our resolve to defend the principles and ideals of the United Nations, the Organization whose fiftieth anniversary we so proudly and solemnly celebrate today.

6.

The Republic of El Salvador

Address by
H.E. Dr. Armando Calderón Sol, President

[*Delivered in Spanish*]

Fifty years ago, the destruction and suffering caused by two world wars led us to reflect deeply and join together to create the United Nations, an Organization intended to maintain international peace and security and foster justice, dignity, human well-being, understanding and cooperation between nations.

The international order of the post-war period was marked by antagonism and ideological confrontation. None the less, the United Nations attained important and substantial achievements, outstanding among which were its significant contributions to avoiding another world war with unimaginable consequences, eliminating colonialism and racial discrimination, encouraging the codification of international law, strengthening the international system of human rights protection and promoting international cooperation for the improvement of the political, economic and social conditions of our peoples.

After so many years of tension and insecurity in the bipolar era, the world has become a substantially different place because of the deep-going transformations it has undergone. The cold war is over, the geopolitical map has been radically altered, a worldwide democratization process has emerged, cooperation has replaced confrontation and a globalization process has begun in the political, economic, social and environmental spheres.

In the light of today's international reality, we are convinced that the purposes and principles of the United Nations are uniquely valid. This is the only universal system that States can trust to study and implement measures for the attainment of common goals of humanity — with the necessary understanding that Member States have the responsibility to provide this intergovernmental Organization with the means and resources needed to reach its objectives. In this regard, the United Nations must deepen the comprehensive modernization process that will enable it to rationalize the use of its resources, while becoming more efficient and transparent in the fulfilment of its functions.

The global agenda we have before us requires prompt and effective responses to the problems of drugs — production, trafficking and consumption — terrorism, money-laundering, organized crime, corruption and all the other scourges afflicting humanity today. At the successful conferences on human rights, environment, population, social development and women, organized by the United Nations, we reached very important worldwide commitments that should be properly followed up.

The eradication of poverty continues to be the main challenge facing the Members of the Organization, and we must not rest until we have broken the fateful cycle that condemns those born into poverty to die in poverty.

In order to put a duly modernized United Nations in the best position to respond effectively to the challenges it faces, it is essential that all Members have the political will to meet their financial obligations.

In connection with the reform process of the Organization, we are in favour of promoting opportunities for participation and increasing representativity. For their very survival, small States must usually be more creative, and that creativity could be put to better use if our right to more equitable participation in all the principal organs of the United Nations were respected. Similarly, the representativity of the Security Council should be augmented to reflect the new structure of the international community.

In commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization, we wish to reaffirm our confidence in the United Nations, especially because its cooperation enabled the Salvadoran people to achieve peace and end a fratricidal conflict that had lasted more than 10 years. The successful contribution of the United Nations to the reconciliation process in El Salvador has served to strengthen our commitment to the principles inspiring it.

We hope that the Declaration adopted at this Special Meeting will constitute an unescapable commitment by all Member States of the Organization to fulfil its purposes and principles and achieve its goals of lasting peace and a better world for future generations.

7. The Republic of Cape Verde

Address by
H.E. Mr. Antonio Mascarenhas Monteiro, President

[Delivered in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation]

First of all, Sir, I wish to tell you how pleased I am by your election to the presidency of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly and, at the same time, I wish to express my firm belief that your well-known personal qualities and extensive experience will guarantee that you will lead the work of our Organization in an effective and decisive manner.

Similarly, I wish to convey our sincere appreciation to your predecessor, a distinguished son of a fraternal country, Côte d'Ivoire, His Excellency Mr. Amara Essy, whose leadership of the forty-ninth session was a valuable asset in the performance of the United Nations.

To the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, I reiterate my warmest tribute for his devoted performance of his duties; he deserves the international community's appreciation and respect for this.

This Special Commemorative Meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is of undeniable importance and significance. This is no mere celebration. The representatives of our countries have a crucial task before them: to assess the course taken in the past half-century and, more important, to assess the future of our Organization. We are at the dawn of a new era, with new challenges and different demands.

We must make a new commitment to the future and, therefore, to the future of our Organization. We should, thus, reaffirm our unequivocal will to continue to fulfil the purposes and principles of the United Nations. Today, after 50 years, it is legitimate to conclude that the United Nations has been able to accomplish its mission. Hence, nobody would know how to define our present world without the United Nations, taking into account not only its role in promoting and facilitating the great, imperative changes, but also its specific action in the most diverse fields of human accomplishment, both individually and collectively.

As for peace, the United Nations has an effective capacity for conceptualization and action, but it needs to be improved. This cannot be delayed in view of the new situation that has occurred since the disappearance of the old East-West confrontation. The current reality requires firm leadership on the part of the United Nations to preserve peace and security in such a way that, in the context of observance of the values and rules of international law, all Member States, big and small, will focus their abilities and energy on the promotion of the well-being to which all peoples have a right.

Therefore, it is essential to underline that development is a vital issue for humanity and I strongly believe that no efforts will succeed without a framework in which peace is an overriding value. Peace and development are components of the same struggle — a common struggle requiring, thus, the commitment of the international community as a whole, on the assumption that what is at stake is the future of humanity.

From the combat against desertification and drought to the protection of the global environment, from poverty eradication to the prevention and management of intra- and inter-State conflicts, from addressing demographic problems to the solution of related refugee and dislocated persons issues, from the perplexing condition of women to social development strategies, from international crime prevention to respect for and promotion of human rights: these are just a few examples of fields requiring the contribution of all those who truly believe in and wish for a better world.

In sum, this is a burden we should not transmit to future generations. We must commit ourselves to efficient, long-term strategies. Yet, in the present context of economic globalization, it is important to overcome the deficit in cooperation and coordination; this is so necessary to ensuring the viability and cohesiveness of international life. This is a priority in the objectives and goals of the United Nations.

Furthermore, our Organization must, above all, reflect the present world with its own dynamics and intrinsic balance. This is how the ongoing reform process should be addressed. Continuing consideration should be given to financial matters so that problems in this area do not impair our ability to act, in particular, in development.

Enhanced lucidity and courage should guide us in our endeavours to promote reform leading to equality of rights among States, as well as transparency and democratization of the United Nations, particularly in the Security Council.

We must overcome the gap between provisions in the United Nations Charter and the palpable reality that we experience internationally. We should not close our eyes or be satisfied with half-solutions; rather, we should be creative and daring. Let us seize this historic, changing momentum.

An organization cannot be and cannot do anything other than what its Member States want it to be or to do. This is, therefore, the only way the United Nations can continue to be, at the dawn of the third millennium, an indispensable tool of the international community, the tool that we celebrate today and we bequeath to coming generations.

8. Australia

Address by

H.E. The Honourable Bill Hayden, AC, Governor-General

As I stand here today before representatives of nearly every nation on earth, I am deeply conscious that the world is a very different place from the one which, 50 years ago, gave birth to the United Nations. As delegates in San Francisco in June 1945 prepared to sign the Charter of the United Nations, most of Europe and a great deal of Asia stood in ruins. Over 48 million people had died and the survivors of the greatest conflict in human history asked themselves what could be done to stop such a catastrophe from ever happening again.

Their answer was to create an organization which sought to enshrine the universal values of tolerance, social progress and respect for human dignity within international machinery; to ensure that all peoples and all nations, whether large or small, could be spared the scourge of war and provided the conditions for economic and social advancement.

The founders of the United Nations were not able to prevent war completely, either in their time or, regrettably, in ours. But the past 50 years have not seen global conflicts again and for that the United Nations can claim no small share. It has also been a time of unparalleled progress in a wide range of areas, some of which is immediately recognizable as the work of the United Nations but much of which has brought to the Organization only rare recognition.

The United Nations has played a crucial role in the pursuit of arms control, in developing the infrastructure for the global nuclear-safeguards system and in identifying and defining international human rights. The United Nations has done much to promote economic and social development, to work to improve the status of women, provide humanitarian and disaster relief, and tackle head-on — with remarkable success — world health problems. And, as one of its greatest achievements, the United Nations has played a central role in decolonization and in the exercise by hundreds of millions of people of the right of self-determination.

I recall with pride Australia's contribution to the founding of the United Nations, because of the central role played by Australia's then Foreign Minister, Mr. Herbert Vere Evatt. While Australia's primary goal for the United Nations in 1945 was the creation of a system in which conflicts between nations could be settled peacefully, in accordance with accepted international legal principles, Mr. Evatt argued, with great effect, that the political activity of the United Nations would not be enough by itself to prevent future conflicts and that the more fundamental causes of the world's problems would have to be tackled if international peace and stability were to be guaranteed.

The Government of Australia believes that, while the nature of the threats to global security and stability have changed dramatically since the Charter came into force 50 years ago, the Charter is as relevant today as it was in 1945 and that we need look no further than to a reaffirmation of its goals and objectives to guide the United Nations in the next millennium.

The challenge the United Nations faces now, and into the next century, is to reintegrate the functions of the Organization in the way the founders intended, to avoid the sterile and rigid division of peace and security issues, development issues and human-rights and justice issues. As Mr. Evatt and the other founders of the United Nations recognized, international peace and — perhaps more appropriately in our day and age — peace within States must be based on an inextricable linking of the concept of peace and security and the concept of development. If human needs for dignity and liberty are not met, all the material gain imaginable is unlikely to lead to sustainable peace. Peace without freedom, without dignity and without basic human rights is forlorn, barren and, at best, temporary.

Change and adaptation in the United Nations presents new challenges, which will require innovative solutions. The United Nations can only do what its Member States allow it to do, and a reintegrated, revitalized United Nations needs not only to lead new thinking on the part of its Member States but also to reflect new thinking. Any path forward must take account of that two-way process.

Moreover, we must not forget that if the United Nations is to work in the way we want it to, it must be provided with appropriate resources, and ultimately we must be prepared to pay for it. In the short term, this means that Member States must pay their assessed contributions in full and on time. Sadly, however, there are Member States that are in arrears not because they are unable to pay but because they are unwilling to do so. Beyond this, it is the Australian Government's view that if we are to address the longer-term problem of how to pay for the United Nations we must look seriously at the options that exist for supplementing Member States' contributions by external sources of finance. To overcome the present and likely continuing financial crisis of the United Nations, clear-sighted and innovative thinking is necessary in an examination of the entire issue of its funding.

The fiftieth anniversary should be a time to resolve what it is we can do for the United Nations — not what we cannot do. We must act cooperatively, decisively and quickly to chart a way forward which will ensure that future

generations inherit a world free from the threat of war and free from the curse of want and inequity — a world which is a living reaffirmation of the fundamental and inalienable dignity and worth of humankind.

The Central African Republic

Address by
H.E. Mr. Ange-Félix Patasse, President

[*Delivered in French*]

I cannot contain my feelings on this exceptional occasion, when the nations of the world are assembled here to testify, equally with the many others who have spoken, to the long road that has been travelled since the signing of the Charter in San Francisco.

Today, on the occasion of the jubilee of our Organization, which is characterized by the density of its history and especially by its experiences, it is more than ever appropriate for the international community to draw the necessary lessons on which to base new hope, but especially, and above all, through which to fulfil the grand design of the Organization, in the interests of our peoples.

In the light of recent achievements, we pay tribute here to the perseverance of our elders, which led to the dismantling of apartheid and, especially, to a glimmer of hope of a final settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is our hope that the same will happen in respect of the various conflicts, latent or acknowledged, which cry out to the United Nations by revealing to the international community the barbarities and atrocities which, unfortunately, we are still witnessing on this the threshold of the twenty-first century.

This is why it is reasonable for us to think that the end of the cold war ought to herald the end of an epoch and the advent of a new world characterized by tolerance, humanism and solidarity so that there might be more justice and peace among peoples and nations.

Hence, it must be emphasized that it appears unfair to certain nations that an Organization which wishes to be universal and democratic excludes other nations from its decision-making bodies. This being the case, it is a matter of urgency that the Security Council be expanded and that the United Nations system be decentralized so that there can be a better response to the sensitivities of the peoples making up the Organization.

We pay tribute to the United Nations for its efforts to support all transition towards constitutional legality, and especially its unshakeable opposition to any desire to revert to dictatorship, whether civilian, military, semi-constitutional or autocratic.

We draw the international community's attention to the very special efforts that we should like to see made on Africa's behalf. Indeed, if there can be no sustainable development without democracy, neither can there be democracy without economic and social development. Africa is therefore resolutely committed to the path of democracy. Today more than ever, the international community must mobilize itself to promote a new international economic order that honours human dignity and supports Africa's efforts to overcome the obstacles it faces: institutional under-representation; a low participation in international trade; a weak capacity for investment because of the burden of domestic and external debt; and above all, the cost of establishing new institutions in States that have just successfully completed their transition to democracy.

That is why, in keeping with the statement I made here in 1994, I repeat my desire to see the establishment of a genuine Marshall Plan for the development of Africa in order to support the irreversible democratic conviction of our peoples.

To the sixth Secretary-General of the United Nations, we repledge our firm support for his work and our sincere faith in the United Nations, guarantor of universal peace, security and global well-being. We wish to see greater determination to combat injustice and more democratic rigour to preserve the universal mission of our Organization, particularly in putting an end to the tensions between the two Chinas and the two Koreas.

Long live our common Organization and may the twenty-first century be more peaceful and more conducive to progress for all humanity.

The Kyrgyz Republic

Address by
H.E. Mr. Mukar Cholponbayev,
Chairman of the Legislative Chamber

[*Delivered in Russian*]

It is a great honour for me to represent my country at this historic Meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Drawing lessons from the tragic mistakes of the past, the Organization was created so that we might join forces in providing mankind with the future it deserves.

As representatives of an ancient people but a young nation, and reflecting on our own history and the half-century of efforts to create a new code of international cooperation, we express today our profound gratitude to the founding fathers of the United Nations. Thanks to their efforts, the world community has been successful in interrupting the tragic cycle of world wars. Today our discussions cover not the problems of global war, but rather global development.

Although we hear criticisms of the United Nations from various directions, we are united in our commitment to its goals and principles. This shows that the United Nations is a living body and that it is needed by all of us. Let us then join our efforts to make it more effective and more responsive to the contemporary challenges facing mankind.

My country highly appreciates the efforts of the United Nations in providing support to countries that have only recently achieved independence. We see our future as linked to the mainstream of global development. We have chosen the path of democracy and radical economic reform. At the moment, preparations for presidential elections, in accordance with democratic principles, are under way in my country. This step underscores our faith in the ideals of freedom and democracy.

We are grateful to the General Assembly for its support for our celebration this year of the thousandth anniversary of our national epic *Manas*, which reflects the humanistic vision of our people in harmony with the ideals of the United Nations. In consideration of this support, the people and Government of my country are presenting the United Nations with a sculpture of our national hero, Manas. This gift will be presented to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros-Ghali, as a symbol of our hopes for solidarity and brotherhood among the peoples of the world.

The world has changed radically in the past 50 years and we believe that it will follow the path of solidarity, mutual trust, tolerance and cooperation.

In this connection, our Organization should be restructured to meet the challenges of the new post-cold-war era. We support the proposals made here concerning the membership of the Security Council, the main aim of which is to make this important body more effective. While paying tribute to the role of the nuclear and economically powerful countries in resolving problems of security and social and economic development, we are not in favour of turning it into a club for the rich and powerful. Moral force, alongside other considerations, should be imperative in the Council's work.

We sympathize with the feelings experienced by small countries in the world community. Here the key to the problem lies in reaffirming the principle of interdependence in the world. The large countries cannot enjoy material and spiritual prosperity until they recognize that they are part of the same world as smaller countries. This logical combination of realism and idealism is the basis for mutual understanding and accord in the future.

Yes, the United Nations today is far from ideal. The main reason why a world war has been avoided is the fear of nuclear catastrophe. But we have yet to grasp the catastrophe threatening humanity from persistent prejudice in our mutual relations, estrangement, and national selfishness. Today, in the final count, peace and prosperity alike are indivisible. There can be no expectation of a lasting universal peace while factors giving rise to hatred, intolerance and conflict persist. At the epicentre of many calamities lie such detonators as poverty, feelings of hurt national pride, and social and psychological tension. In this regard, we would like to see the United Nations as an international mechanism for preventing catastrophes rather than fighting their consequences. When raising the issue of global well-being one cannot ignore the overall aspect of regional cooperation: the problems of ecology, security and drug trafficking require the joint efforts of all interested parties. Our country is prepared to cooperate in these efforts with the United Nations and its Members.

The strength of the United Nations is in us — its Members. The efficiency and authority of our Organization depend on our own will and trust, our political and financial support and skilled human resources. My country, as a new Member, is ready to bring to the next 50 years of the United Nations its peacefulness and good will, its energy and enthusiasm and its knowledge and experience. We believe in the United Nations.

1. The Togolese Republic

Address by
H.E. Mr. Dahuku Péré,
President of the National Assembly

[*Delivered in French*]

At this solemn time, when our community is paying tribute to the major figures who created the United Nations, the fiftieth anniversary of which we are celebrating, I would like, on behalf of the Head of State of Togo, His Excellency Gnassingbé Eyadema, to convey his greetings and express the joy and just pride that I feel, in speaking on behalf of Togo. The importance of this event, the fiftieth anniversary, deserves to be celebrated at the Special Commemorative Session.

In my country, this event has a very special character, for two reasons. First, as a former ward of the United Nations, Togo, to some extent, owes its accession to international sovereignty to the United Nations. In this respect, it is appropriate to commemorate this anniversary in a significant way, and this, subsequently, has justified the fact that I am participating in this ceremony on behalf of our Head of State.

The people of Togo and their President would like here to express their profound gratitude to the international community for the inestimable support they gave to Togo in its struggle to affirm its identity and personality in order to meet its destiny by becoming independent.

On this solemn occasion, my country renews its firm commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. This solemn meeting offers us an opportunity to think about the major problems facing the world. Coming as it does at the end of the cold war, this fiftieth anniversary gives Member States an opportunity to strengthen the friendship and solidarity among their peoples so that a new approach in relations can emerge, truly based on the independence and equality of States. Henceforth, these relations should develop as part of a dynamic partnership based essentially on independence.

A rapid survey of the activities of our Organization over the last 50 years shows that while it has allowed the world to escape a world war of a scope comparable to the last two wars, the effects of which traumatized humanity, our Organization has not fulfilled our hopes — either in the area of peace-keeping or in the area of economic and social development. Indeed, despite the enormous means invested in safeguarding and restoring regional and international peace and security, this goal is far from being achieved. The world is witness to new armed conflicts the end of which cannot be foreseen.

In the light of the lessons drawn from the experience of peace-keeping operations, it is important, in my country's view, to strengthen the capability of the United Nations in the area of preventive diplomacy and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

With respect to the reforms we are thinking about, we might more actively involve the General Assembly, which is fully representative of the international community when the modes of settlement prescribed by Chapter VI of the Charter are applied.

With regard to restructuring the Security Council, we must take into account the claims of a number of States which would like to have equitable representation in that body, so that its composition might reflect today's international realities, and so that the management of international peace and security would no longer fall within the competence only of the major Powers.

Economically speaking, we must deplore the fact that efforts to date have not made it possible to meet the challenges on the road to development and to improve the well-being of the populations in the South. It is a fact that the progress registered in the countries of the North and the stability of the world cannot be consolidated if the international community does not more firmly commit itself to the eradication of poverty, misery and illiteracy.

It is now a matter of correcting the inadmissible imbalances that characterize the economic relations between the developed and the developing countries, and thereby bring about justice and fairness.

Similarly, it is a matter of pressing urgency to reform the international financial and monetary system in order to improve the international economic environment, bearing in mind the deep aspirations of the majority of the peoples of the world.

The goals that our Organization has set for itself cannot be achieved without adequate economic support or without real solidarity between the rich and the poor countries. These things are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

This constantly changing world is far from being the one that could provide the vital minimum that all humanity needs in order to survive. Our Organization is obliged to redouble its efforts to achieve the goals of justice and fairness. In order to do so, we must explore and exploit as best we can all the possibilities which agencies and institutions have — be they subregional, regional or international — in order to ensure peace on the one hand, and on the other hand to ensure economic relations solidly based on partnership.

After 50 years, we must be able to affirm that, thanks to the United Nations, the course of history has profoundly changed for humanity. This change will bring further happiness to humanity if the efforts made by the United Nations can be adapted to the new international context. That is the only way that we will be able to accomplish our noble missions.

People throughout the world, while lauding the scope of the work already done by the United Nations to bring about peace and solidarity among peoples, expect that it will meet their deepest aspirations better in the next 50 years than it has done in the last 50 years.

12. Barbados

Address by
H.E. The Honourable Owen Arthur, MP, Prime Minister
and Minister for Finance and Economic Affairs

The adoption of the Charter, by consensus, at the United Nations Conference on International Organization in San Francisco in 1945, represents one of the great moments of history. Today we are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, which embodied the hopes and aspirations of a world devastated by war. The vision of global cooperation enshrined in the new world Organization blossomed and matured into an extensive network of institutions — the United Nations system — whose service to humanity has touched the daily lives of people in every corner of the world.

The United Nations has built a proud record of accomplishments. It has become our best hope for promoting global peace and security, even as it fashions a body of international law that enables global interdependence, cooperation and communications.

This Organization, particularly through its specialized agencies, has coordinated international efforts against disease, hunger and suffering. It has promoted democracy and economic and social justice, and, to this end, has provided a universal mechanism for charting international economic and social policy.

And within the process of decolonization, the United Nations has not only secured the dismantling of apartheid, but has also played a significant role in ensuring that more than 60 countries — many of which, like Barbados, are small and vulnerable — have achieved their independence.

Barbados salutes the leadership provided by the distinguished Secretaries-General and the dedicated staff who have served with distinction the noble mission of the United Nations.

These accomplishments must not blur the real difficulties or complexity of the tasks that have confronted, and continue to confront, this Organization. Many setbacks have occurred along the way. In moments of frustration and disappointment, we have even wondered, often aloud, if the United Nations has failed us, perhaps forgetting that our United Nations represents no more and no less than the collective will of our Governments, which it serves.

Looking ahead, the United Nations of the next 50 years must embark on its unfinished journey, reformed and re-energized, to meet the challenges of a world of tumultuous global change. Barbados reaffirms its commitment to the ideals of the Charter, which will guide us on this journey.

The reformed United Nations must construct a new system of security along the lines contained in "An Agenda for Peace", to reflect the changed nature of today's conflicts, conflicts mainly within nations rather than between nations. It must accelerate and intensify its development mission. In particular, it must respond with dispatch to the cry and suffering of the world's poor, whose plight weighs heavily on the conscience of the international community. It must implement the wide-ranging Programmes of Action created by the continuum of United Nations conferences, from Rio to Beijing; and, of special significance, the Bridgetown Declaration on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. Should it do so, we can contemplate a happier future, in which nations live in peace, diverse cultures flourish in harmony, and all people enjoy freedom and material well-being.

The United Nations remains a special place for small island developing States. Often buffeted by both natural and man-made disasters and by the economic dislocations of globalization, they look to the United Nations for protection and support. For Barbados, this United Nations — even though less than perfect — is still our greatest hope for peace, development and social justice.

13. Belize

Address by
H.E. The Right Honourable Manuel Esquivel,
Prime Minister

Fifty years ago world leaders gathered in San Francisco to declare their determination to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Succeeding generations, including our own, have seen continuing progress in addressing the issues set out in that opening paragraph of the Preamble to our Charter. We applaud the successes, even as we must pledge to correct the failures.

We must recognize that the preoccupations of 1945 are not necessarily those of the present generation. The 50 original signatories to the Charter could not have foreseen that 50 years later this world Organization would consist of Member States with populations ranging from 1 billion to 16,000 people.

It is easy to understand that war and the peaceful settlement of disputes would have been the number one priority in 1945. I suggest that in 1995 priority number one is to be found not in the Preamble to the Charter, nor even in Article 1, but rather in Article 2, which states that this

"Organization is based on ... the sovereign equality of all its Members." In 1945 Members probably regarded that statement as self-evident. Today, as the large and powerful sit side by side with the small and vulnerable, the principle of sovereign equality is a difficult pill for some and an elusive goal for others.

We must confess that equality presents this Organization with a vast amount of unfinished business. Although the provisions of the Charter refer to the equal rights of nations large and small, it is troubling that during these 50 years this Organization has not systematically constructed edifices to enshrine equality. Too often the word is used in a rhetorical manner. As we all know, there is a formal equality, which connotes non-discrimination or liberalized access, and there is substantive equality, which connotes tangible benefit. Even in the formal sense, equality among Member States has been generally treated as a distant aspiration. Even our elaborate resolutions for human rights too often provide shelter for discriminatory practices, even in the areas with which we have been most preoccupied, such as civil and political rights.

In the political realm, despite this Organization's success in destroying the ramparts of colonialism, I regret that the embers of formal inequality burn very bright in the composition of the Security Council, the most vital organ for peace and security. It is time that we amended the Charter to guarantee that we will hear the important voice of small Member States and of all geographic regions in both echelons of membership of the Council.

In the social field, the Organization has only just began systematically to address such issues as full employment, social integration and poverty, in the national and international context. Clearly, we need to recognize that formal equality must here play an important part.

We have been most active about enshrining formal equality for nations in matters of trade and economics. However, when we inquire why this is so, we must confess that this doctrine seeks not so much to benefit all the nations and peoples, large and small, as much as it happens to coincide with economic doctrines that are designed to serve the interests of the larger economies. It is for this reason that I must express my deep concern about the pressure being brought to bear on smaller nations to join in the rush towards the new economic orthodoxy of free trade. For small, largely agricultural economies to survive in a world of free trade, a level playing field is not the only prerequisite for fair competition. The sporting metaphor that is more appropriate is that of the horse race, in which the stronger and more experienced bear a heavier load to help equalize the potentials of the weaker and the less experienced.

In view of what I have just said, it is evident that the goal of substantive equality for both individuals and groups is very distant. It is even possible that there does not yet exist a clear consensus that, 50 years from the foundation of this Organization, all human beings, all States and all peoples are truly created equal. As a matter of fact, in some circles such a proposition might well still be considered heresy. After all, as we approach the twenty-first century, we are still unable generally to accept the proposition that poverty is a global problem that requires global solutions. In fact, many are unprepared to accept that human beings and nations are entitled to move steadily upward on economic, social, political and cultural trajectories which will provide genuine equality.

Many sectors of first-world society are still at a level of evolution where they cannot accept the minimal obligation that those societies should effectively transfer a nominal 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance. In fact, this year the developed world has allocated a mere 0.3 per cent of gross domestic product to development assistance, the lowest level since 1973. Legal scholars still fail to accept that there may be a binding legal obligation to provide development assistance or economic cooperation for the world's betterment. Many of the world's wealthiest nations fail to acknowledge a moral obligation to help the poorest, or even to recognize that their own continued wealth ultimately depends on the growth of the purchasing power of the 4.5 billion people living in the world's developing countries. Yet most of the systems of religion and ethics that are represented in this Hall today espouse credos which acknowledge or require a responsible social conscience. I share the Secretary-General's fear, expressed in "An Agenda for Development", that

> "development as a common cause is in danger of fading from the forefront of our agenda". *(A/48/935, para. 5)*

Equality is the great unfinished business as much for this Organization as for all humanity. It is incumbent on us, at this time and in this place, to revitalize the commitment to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war by resolving promptly to complete this unfinished business. In that connection, let us recall the original intent of the creators of the Charter of the United Nations, expressed or implied even before the United Nations Charter, in the Atlantic Charter and other wartime documents, that freedom from fear and freedom from want are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. Let us therefore resolve to vitalize and generalize the slogan of the recent World Conference on Women: let there be equality, development and peace.

14. The United Arab Emirates

Address by
His Highness Sheikh Sultan Bin Zayed Al-Nahayan,
Deputy Prime Minister and Special Envoy of the Head of State

[Delivered in Arabic]

It is an honour for me to convey to you the blessings and greetings of the President of the United Arab Emirates, His Highness Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahayan, and of the Government and the people of the United Arab Emirates on this important occasion marking the passage of 50 years since the foundation of the United Nations. The establishment of the United Nations was an important, historic turning-point in the lives of nations and peoples because of the Organization's active role in affirming the right to self-determination, the achievement of economic and social development and the maintenance of international peace and security.

Our participation in these celebrations clearly reflects our firm belief in the important and historic role of the United Nations in the establishment of a new era of international relations and in strengthening peace and security, especially in the Arab region, a region that has been ravaged, over the past few decades, by numerous wars and conflicts that have consumed its material and human energy and resources. The peoples and countries of the region expect the United Nations to perform a larger role in addressing the problems that resulted from those wars and conflicts and in finding radical solutions that would lead to the realization of the hopes and aspirations of the region's peoples after peace, justice, development and stability.

In this context, the Iranian occupation of our three islands poses a direct threat to the security of the region in general, and to that of the United Arab Emirates in particular.

On this important occasion when all countries shall renew their commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter and to the rules and norms of international law, we reaffirm our resolute political will to strengthen the role and increase the effectiveness of the Organization and its specialized agencies, in order for it to achieve the purposes for which it was established: namely, the creation of a world that would be free from war, repression, injustice and poverty. We reaffirm our position of principle against extremism, terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the illicit trafficking in drugs, and call for the liberalization of international trade in the interests of international cooperation.

It is our hope that these celebrations will be a step towards evaluating the lessons of the past, and a new departure towards a bright future in which all mankind would enjoy security, stability and development.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Address by
His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud,
Second Deputy Prime Minister,
Minister of Defence and Aviation and Inspector General

[Delivered in Arabic]

It is with pleasure that I congratulate the President of the General Assembly on behalf of The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd bin Abdulaziz, King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on his election to the presidency of the current session, which coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and, thereby, acquires special significance. His election is an expression of esteem for him and for his country. I also wish to commend the efforts of His Excellency the Secretary-General in the service of peace.

As I journeyed to New York to participate in this historic occasion, I reflected upon personal memories and general impressions. Fifty years ago the late King Faisal, then the Foreign Minister of my country, accompanied by King Fahd, embarked upon a similar journey to the United States with instructions from the late King Abdulaziz Al Saud, the founder of modern Saudi Arabia, to participate in the establishment of this Organization, which arose out of tragic events.

At the time, my country had just emerged from its own experience in establishing the foundations of peace and security over most of the Arabian Peninsula. After King Abdulaziz had succeeded in reunifying the Kingdom in accordance with the noble Islamic Shariah, which calls for justice, equality and brotherhood among people, he participated in the establishment of an international Organization which strives for the same principles on a universal level.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia represents the heart of the Muslim world, from whose soil the Islamic faith emerged; a faith which places peace at the forefront of its virtuous principles and rejects violence and terrorism. As a result, King Fahd continues to spare no effort in enabling the Kingdom to discharge its mission towards peace.

The Kingdom has completed an ambitious development programme and has made positive contributions towards the creation of a better world. A good example is my country's well-balanced oil policy and its foreign aid programme, which has contributed a total of $70.6 billion over the past two decades to the benefit of 72 developing nations.

My country continues to believe in the importance of working towards realizing the objectives of this Organization. The resolutions which the Security Council adopted after the brutal Iraqi aggression against Kuwait had the most positive effect, and renewed confidence in the important role of the United Nations in supporting countries whose sovereignty is threatened. Kuwait was able to restore its right of existence and sovereignty.

I wish to note that the Kingdom attaches great importance to the safety and territorial integrity of Iraq. However, it holds the Iraqi regime responsible for the suffering of the Iraqi people and believes that the only way to alleviate this suffering is for the Iraqi regime to fully implement all Security Council resolutions, including the release of all prisoners of war.

International cooperation has had a positive impact in setting in motion the Middle East peace process, which was launched at the Madrid Conference. While the peace process has not yet achieved its ultimate goal, the opportunity still remains to move it forward, in particular on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, provided there is adherence to its basis, namely, Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) relating to Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, and Security Council resolution 252 (1968) regarding al-Quds al-Sharif which occupies a special place in the heart of every Muslim. In order for the desired peace to be based on trust, all weapons of mass destruction must be eliminated from the entire Middle East region.

The Serb aggression against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina requires firmness in confronting it. The aggressor has refused to respond to all international pleas, while the Bosnians are denied the ability to acquire the means of defending themselves. The international response, under the leadership of the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), was an appropriate one, even if it was late in coming.

This tragedy highlights the need for the United Nations not to be a strictly humanitarian organization, but to resume its role of establishing peace on the basis of justice and equality. Our Organization should not merely manage conflicts, but prevent them. Delays in responding to events cause the United Nations to waste its resources on failures rather than successes, and on death rather than on life.

The capabilities the United Nations has demonstrated over the past 50 years and the constructive role it has played in mobilizing international cooperation make us determined to support it in discharging its mission, particularly today, as it finds itself at a crossroads which will determine its future. If the yardstick of the Organization's success lies in its effectiveness in serving the cause of international peace and security, we must underscore the importance of abiding by its Charter and enforcing the resolutions of international legality. It is the hope of The Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques that our celebration today will make a watershed in the history of our

Organization that will make it possible for the United Nations to achieve its goals and make it possible for all peoples of the world to live in security and to achieve continued progress.

May God Almighty help us attain the objectives we strive for. As the Almighty reveals in the Holy Quran:

> "Help ye one another in righteousness and piety, but help ye not one another in sin and rancour". *(Susa V., verse II)*

16. The State of Qatar

Address by
His Highness Sheikh Abdulla bin Khalifa Al-Thani,
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior

[*Delivered in Arabic*]

I should like to express our joy at this major celebration, the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. This body is the source of all the hopes for a stable world of peace and well-being for mankind. Qatar hopes that this anniversary will provide us with the opportunity for new departures towards the establishment of a new world that would strengthen the trust of peoples in the norms of civilized living and that would see the achievement of people's expectations for economic and social development and human dignity.

We ardently hope to see the birth of a new United Nations, which can firmly and effectively face up to the challenges of wars, internal conflicts, ethnic intolerance and other hurdles which hold back mankind's progress. This can happen only if the Organization can do more than set up machinery to deal with conflicts after they erupt. Preventive measures should be taken to forestall such conflagrations through the development of societies, economically and socially and combating poverty, sickness and all the other causes of underdevelopment.

In order for the United Nations to achieve this, it must increase the effectiveness of its machineries: its councils, organs and specialized bodies, especially the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Membership of the Security Council should be expanded, the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process should be improved, the Organization's role in the economic and social fields should be reactivated and the shortcomings in the performance of its specialized agencies in these two areas should be rectified. This should be done in the interests of the Organization's goals which would lead to the prevalence of justice in the world and make it possible for all peoples to ensure for their future generations a future of peace, security and prosperity.

The question of the Middle East and the establishment of peace and justice in that region have been the focus of considerable efforts by the United Nations since its establishment. Today we can see some of the results of those laudable efforts.

The present peace process will, we hope, achieve the desired goal of finding a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement in the Middle East.

The State of Qatar, which appreciates the achievements of the United Nations, reaffirms its commitment to supporting this international Organization in order for it to achieve its noble goals and realize the aspirations of mankind. Given its belief in the mission of the United Nations and its awareness of the Organization's positive role in working for the emergence of a new world that would be founded on the purposes of the Charter and on commitment to its principles, especially those relating to the sovereignty of States, their territorial integrity and non-interference in their internal affairs as well as to the settlement of disputes, by peaceful means, the State of Qatar will continue, within the limits of the resources available to it, to contribute to supporting the United Nations activities so that it may achieve its goals and realize the hopes attached to it.

On this solemn occasion, we look forward to a new United Nations that would be capable of translating into concrete reality the goals it was established to achieve and that would, thereby, earn the confidence of all the world's peoples; a new United Nations that would contribute effectively to the making of a future of security and development for all men.

On behalf of the Emir, Government and people of the State of Qatar, we pay tribute to the United Nations on its fiftieth anniversary and call upon the representatives of the conscience of the world's peoples to support it, to abide by its decisions and to adhere to its principles so that it may become the true voice of all peoples that gives tongue to their true will and to their aspirations after a better future.

17. The Kingdom of Lesotho

Address by
H.E. The Honourable Bethuel Pakalitha Mosisili,
Deputy Prime Minister

We are gathered here to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and to reaffirm the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and our commitment to them, particularly the principles of the sovereign equality of States, territorial integrity and non-interference in the domestic jurisdiction of States, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the avoidance of the threat or use of force in inter-State relations.

The end of the cold war raised hopes for a better world free of war, bloodshed, privation, famine and pestilence. We in Lesotho understand the bitter consequences of war and other war-like conflicts. Hence our unswerving commitment to peace. As the founder of our nation, King Moshoeshoe I, put it:

> "Peace is like rain which makes the grass grow,
> While war is like the wind which dries it up."

Because the absence of rain is a constant menace to our survival as a nation, we consider rain as being on a par with peace. This explains our founding father's metaphor. We therefore call on all nations to renounce war and to ban all nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

As we celebrate this historic occasion, we cannot but rejoice in the accomplishments of the United Nations in bringing the nations of the world together. Internal and international conflicts are, however, not over and we need, therefore, to reflect on their causes. Most, if not all, are a result of socio-economic deprivation, political and religious intolerance, oppression, ethnic cleansing, foreign occupation, genocide, xenophobia and colonial domination. All these are inimical to the United Nations principles and purposes, and our common resolve, therefore, should be to work together to build a world devoid of them.

It is in this connection that Lesotho is proud of its modest contribution to one of the ideals of the United Nations, namely, tolerance among peoples. During the dark days of apartheid we shared our modest resources with refugees from neighbouring South Africa without making them feel that they were outsiders. We pay tribute to the United Nations not only for its role in hastening the demise of apartheid, but also for material assistance to the refugees. We continue to place great store in the United Nations programme in the field of human rights. As Lesotho has steadily proceeded to construct a democratic governance, it has adhered to instruments safeguarding fundamental freedoms and human rights, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

The three pillars of the United Nations agenda in the next 50 years are peace, human rights and the betterment of humankind's economic and social condition. The Organization's capacity to satisfy our aspirations in those fields must be especially enhanced and its institutional reform accelerated.

In our view, such reform is critical in the three areas to which I have just referred. The Security Council needs to be enlarged so as to reflect current political realities, in which the countries of the South are a preponderant majority of the United Nations. The Council's decision-making, which has been monopolized by a handful of Member States for half a century, is no longer in consonance with the present-day drive for democracy within and among States.

Similarly, the organs dealing with social, environmental and economic matters, notably the Economic and Social Council, must be restructured to enable them to better deliver on the Organization's commitment to meeting the challenges facing the underprivileged members of our international community. Finally, the Secretariat must be equipped to respond effectively to the myriad problems needing the Secretary-General's attention. Topping the list of requirements, in this connection, is the provision of adequate financial and human resources to the Secretariat.

We ought to be proud that up to now we have, through collective action, warded off a calamity such as was the Second World War. It seems that a similar calamity may not recur. However, the economic, social and environmental future of the majority of humankind still remains bleak. Let us therefore rededicate ourselves once more to making the United Nations a veritable embodiment of humankind's hopes and aspirations for a better world for all.

18. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

Address by
H.E. Mr. Omar Mustafa Muntasser,
Secretary of the General People's Committee
for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation

[Delivered in Arabic]

In the course of the fifty years that have elapsed since its establishment, the United Nations has sought to strengthen the procedures that guarantee the security and safety of peoples, ensure their obtention of their rights, promote their development and accelerate their advancement. But the Organization's success in achieving these goals has been modest.

Even in the post-cold war era, which had given rise to many expectations, the record shows that developments in the international arena have shown that those expectations were too optimistic. The factors that impeded economic progress in many countries of the world have not been radically dealt with. Unemployment rates have continued to rise. Social disintegration has increased, the vertical development of nuclear weapons has continued and civil wars and regional conflicts have broken out in most regions in a manner that has given the impression that the globe we live on has suddenly exploded.

Failure by the United Nations is not due to any defect in its Charter. It is due to the absence of political will in the case of a number of major Powers that want for the Organization either to become impotent and incapable of performing its tasks by withholding the funds it needs, or to surrender to the pressures of those Powers and to execute their designs. Regrettably, those few States have succeeded in achieving their objectives. The General Assembly, which should be the highest authority in the United Nations system, has had its role marginalized in such a way that it has become a sort of wailing wall where the small and poor countries shed their tears, exchange their woes while nobody listens and nobody cares. Most powers have been concentrated in the Security Council which has turned into a sort of exclusive club whose activities are governed by selfish interests and where double standards are the order of the day. In its actions, the Council no longer observes the rule of law but has turned into a body governed by customary law. This has enabled a few of its members to impose their policies, get their designs adopted and use the Council as a tool to impose sanctions on countries, especially small ones, in an attempt at subjugating them. Worse still, the Security Council, which is the body entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, has become an instrument of aggression.

This situation is untenable and impossible to coexist with. It is therefore necessary to evaluate the actions of the Organization and to seek to enhance its role in promoting development, correcting the imbalance in the world economy with its many trade barriers and coercive measures, and guaranteeing the settlement of disputes between States by peaceful means, and not by the imposition of unjust sanctions. The United Nations capabilities should be strengthened in the areas of combating desertification, removing minefields, halting the deterioration of the environment, solving the host of problems that beset the world, such as poverty, hunger, drugs and organized crime, as well as epidemic and endemic diseases. The Organization should be enabled also to intensify efforts to eradicate the phenomenon of international terrorism in all its forms. Libya has sought and still seeks to combat terrorism and has called for the convening of a special session of the General Assembly for the study of the phenomenon of terrorism, including State terrorism. That is why it is unfair to accuse my country of terrorism as the American President did yesterday. The fact is that terrorism is, in essence, an American phenomenon. The United States has habitually used it against most peoples and States, including Libya, which has been the target of several American conspiracies aimed at overthrowing its revolutionary regime. When it failed to do so, the United States imposed on Libya its coercive measures and targeted it with many provocations by its Mediterranean fleets. American terrorism reached its peak when hundreds of American military aircraft, under the cover of darkness, raided and bombed Libya's cities, demolished houses, and left behind tens of innocent civilian casualties, including women and children. Lastly, the United States used the Security Council to impose unjust sanctions against Libya, under the pretext of a legal dispute already dealt with in the 1971 Montreal Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation. These sanctions have resulted in the death and injury of thousands of Libyan nationals in road accidents because of the intensive use of roads. In addition, the economic losses have exceeded tens of billions of dollars.

For these and other reasons, it has become essential to reform the United Nations so that it may carry out its tasks in accordance with the wishes of all its Member States and not as a sword that hangs over their necks, especially the necks of the small ones among them. This requires the independence of the Organization in preparing its agendas and in adopting its resolutions. In this context, the role of the General Assembly in the field of maintaining international peace and security must be enhanced especially when the posture of the Security Council becomes harmful to international peace. The powers of this General Assembly must be extended to include following up and monitoring other bodies specially the Security Council which should be held accountable to it: the General Assembly should look into the Council's resolutions to see to what extent they are consistent with the Charter and with the aims and purposes of the United Nations. Membership of the Security Council should be increased and should reflect an equitable geographic distribution. The Council's working methods should be improved to guarantee that it should not apply double standards in dealing with international issues. Also, participation in the decision-making processes of the Council should be expanded. The Council's tendency to follow the wishes of certain members in its interpretations of the Charter, especially Article 39 thereof, should be halted. The Council should perform in accordance with the wishes of all Member States. It is now high time to repeal the veto power because it is inconsistent with the principle of sovereign equality and has been used to prevent the condemnation of acts of aggression and punishment of the aggressor. The veto power has been used several times against the exercise of the right to self-determination by peoples that still languish under the yoke of colonialism. Above all this, it is no longer acceptable that such a privilege should be enjoyed by States which still colonize other countries and which seek to perpetuate their hegemony over the fate of the world and to monopolize the power of making international decisions.

This is our view of the march of the United Nations — our assessment of its role and our vision of what it should be in order for it to be able to perform its tasks. We hope that this occasion will be a starting-point for an unshackled United Nations that would continue to be revitalized and committed to the service of all peoples and not just a few States that seek to use it as a means to achieve their own ends. These few should realize that the United Nations has not been freed from the shackles of the cold war to find itself shackled by the fetters of major Powers. Should these States insist on making the United Nations deviate from its goals, and on exploiting it in imposing their domination on small and poor countries, they should not forget that it is the small countries that have helped the United Nations increase its membership and attain universality. Those small countries are quite capable of establishing their own organization away from the domination and hegemony of a few major Powers.

[*Continued in English*]

For people to reflect on, in *Macbeth* it says:
"Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death."

[*Continued in Arabic*]

I have conveyed the message to you all.

19. The Republic of the Congo

Address by
H.E. Mr. Destin-Arsène Tsaty-Boungou,
Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Francophonie

[Delivered in French]

As we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, allow me to add the Congo's voice to the unanimous tribute paid here to the illustrious founding fathers and the important work carried out by the United Nations in decolonization, the promotion of human rights and the codification of international law.

This fiftieth anniversary comes at a time when a black page in the history of mankind, the page of the cold war, has been turned. But the world continues to face other challenges. Indeed, the widespread desire to bring uniformity to international society in political and institutional terms, on the one hand, and economic and social terms, on the other, has led to an imbalance every bit as dramatic as the imbalance not so long ago when the world was bipolar.

East-West confrontation has been succeeded by another "cold war", even more injurious to the peoples of the South, especially those in Africa who daily fall prey to hunger, ignorance and disease.

Yet this fiftieth anniversary might have been an occasion to pay tribute to the progress accomplished by Africa in the past 50 years thanks to the solidarity of the international community. This fiftieth anniversary might also have been a time to rejoice that the countries that 50 years ago were poor and dominated, especially those on the African continent, now find themselves today among the prosperous nations of our planet, a natural position, given their boundless natural resources.

Unfortunately, on this fiftieth anniversary we are obliged to note that the same nations that were powerful 50 years ago are even more powerful today thanks to their command of science and technology. The expectations of the African peoples, who, like the other peoples of the planet, contributed to the liberation of mankind in the two major armed world confrontations that preceded the birth of the United Nations, have not been fulfilled by a fitting display of solidarity on the part of the international community.

Today, the end of the ideological war does offer prospects for African development thanks to the democratization of our countries' institutions. Yet for many African countries, the end of the single-party system that subjected their populations to so many misfortunes and conflicts has not created the conditions for a peaceful and prosperous life — far from it. Longstanding and long-repressed political resentments have turned into civil and even ethnic wars, compromising any chance of creating the conditions favourable to investment and development.

The United Nations and the international community as a whole cannot remain indifferent to our peoples' desire to gain greater freedom, greater justice, and greater social well-being, as well as — and above all — to accede to the most relevant and greatest power of mankind — knowledge.

Africa can then be at the rendezvous of the history of nations certain that the principles of solidarity, equality and justice proclaimed in this Assembly as virtues sacred and cardinal to man's life and prosperity will indeed be the active ingredients of cooperation between North and South.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria

Address by

H.E. Chief Tom Ikimi, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mr. President, on behalf of my Head of State, General Sani Abacha, and the Government and people of Nigeria, I convey to you warm greetings as we observe in a Special Commemorative Meeting the high point of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

In the view of my Government, it is legitimate and purposeful that we transcend the euphoria of the occasion to take a hard look at the very purposes and principles which informed the founding of our Organization. As we do so, it is important that we have the courage to admit our failures and record successes.

Thirty-five years ago Nigeria was admitted as the ninety-ninth Member of the Organization. On that occasion our first Prime Minister, Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, articulated our nation's foreign-policy principles and underlined our commitment to the United Nations. He said, *inter alia*:

> "First, it is the desire of Nigeria ... to remain on friendly terms with all nations and to participate actively in the work of the United Nations. Secondly, Nigeria, a large and populous country ... has absolutely no territorial or expansionist intentions. Thirdly, we shall not forget our old friends, and we are proud to have been accepted as a member of the ... Commonwealth. But, nevertheless, we do not intend to ally ourselves as a matter of routine with any of the Power blocs. We are committed to uphold the principles upon which the United Nations is founded. Fourthly, Nigeria hopes to work with other African States for the progress of Africa and to assist in bringing all African territories to a state of responsible independence." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifteenth Session, Plenary Meetings, 893rd meeting, para. 173)*

Today, I stand before the Special Commemorative Meeting on the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization to reaffirm these principles of our foreign policy as well as Nigeria's commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter. All Member States have the duty, under the Charter of the Organization, to respect the rights of all nations, big or small, and to refrain from the threat or use of force and pressure capable of subverting the sovereignty and independence of other States.

The theme of war and peace has confronted the United Nations since its inception. Indeed, the founding fathers of the world body expressed their determination

> "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which...has brought untold sorrow to mankind".

Regrettably, these wars are proliferating mostly in the developing countries and have resulted in mindless human and material waste, destruction and dislocation of social structures, tidal waves of refugees and displacement of populations.

A major instrument for preserving international peace and security has been United Nations peace-keeping operations. These operations require huge financial, human and material resources. Nigeria has made important contributions to international peace-keeping efforts. We believe that United Nations peace-keeping operations have largely succeeded in mitigating suffering, staving off hunger and starvation and helping to resolve conflict. Nonetheless, the underlying causes of many conflicts are mainly social and economic. Therefore, the United Nations must strike a balance between the resources devoted to peace-keeping operations and those made available for economic development.

Development is a question of the human condition, and for many countries it is indeed a question of survival. Hence, the Agenda for Development must present a fitting complement to "An Agenda for Peace". When we address the issues of development, there must be a renewed sense of cooperation and partnership between the developed and the developing countries. The benefits of the recent growth in the world economy should also be more evenly distributed among all countries. Countries of the South should not remain trapped in poverty and underdevelopment nor constrained by low commodity prices, unfavourable trade practices, dwindling resource inflows, restrictions in the transfer of technology, unpredictable global monetary and financial systems and external debt burden.

We in Africa recognize that our socio-economic destinies lie in our hands. None the less, the peculiar and unsatisfactory economic situation of the continent needs to be addressed as a shared responsibility. Therefore, the international community needs urgently to deliver on its commitment to Africa and fully implement the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

We in Nigeria are grateful for the interest shown by the international community in the evolution of our political and economic experiences, but we wish to recall that the destiny of Nigeria must remain in the hands of the people of our country. In this regard my Administration has taken enormous steps to restructure and revitalize our country's economy through deregulation and creation of incentives for investment.

Our programme of transition to democratic rule seeks to widen the base of governance and ensure the participation of all sections of the country. It proceeds from the premise that our sovereignty is inviolate and our nation indivisible. In our view, sustainable democracy can be achieved only if it draws sustenance from the socio-economic conditions of a people or derives from their political experience.

In conclusion, permit me to observe that from decolonization to peace operations, from the promotion of peace and security to the pursuit of development, the management of the environment and the promotion of human rights, the record of performance of the Organization has been impressive. There have also been disconcerting failures. Hence we believe that the Organization needs urgently to reform itself and democratize its major organs, particularly the Security Council and related institutions and agencies, to ensure representativeness, equitable geographical distribution, transparency and effectiveness.

In this regard Nigeria reaffirms the position of the Organization of African Unity that our continent should have two permanent members in an enlarged and reformed Security Council.

Finally, the United Nations must redefine its capacity and role as well as shift its focus away from crisis management to the pursuit of development and the primacy of international law. To this end the international community can always count on Nigeria's contribution and support.

21. Papua New Guinea

Address by
H.E. The Honourable Ben Micah, MP,
Special Envoy of the Prime Minister

It is my honour and pleasure to address this Special Commemorative Meeting of the General Assembly to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations on behalf of the people and Government of Papua New Guinea.

First allow me to offer my warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of this historic fiftieth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Emerging from the scourge of the Second World War and the devastation inflicted by the nuclear holocaust, the founding fathers of the United Nations designed this unique multilateral Organization destined to foster international harmony, promote development, and ensure world peace and security. Much has been achieved in this first half-century of the work of the United Nations. However, greater challenges still lie ahead. The United Nations no doubt remains the only global entity capable of shaping international consensus in order to instil confidence and facilitate international development cooperation. Papua New Guinea stands to salute the achievements of the United Nations and will continue to support the noble cause and objectives of the Organization.

The end of the cold war provides a rare opportunity to the international community to divert its energies and resources towards positive development directed at meeting the basic needs of our peoples and thereby ensuring long-term peace and stability.

We have reached consensus on a number of important points at the international level, with the focus on social and economic issues, thus giving further impetus to international confidence-building. However, the full realization of the programmes of action has not yet been achieved. It will require dedication, commitment and, above all, political will and moral courage to commit the necessary resources for the effective implementation of the programmes adopted.

The forces of economic globalization have profoundly changed the geopolitical landscape, creating new opportunities as well as new challenges. While global economic integration has its positive aspect, it does not however promote homogenous development. The weakness of the international monetary system and unequal trading practices severely retard the economic growth of developing nations and further add to the difficulties of achieving competitiveness and access to markets in industrialized countries. Efforts to establish appropriate mechanisms to assist developing countries are concomitant with the issues of job creation, improving family income, and attaining social progress.

Environmental issues have become an all-encompassing international agenda. Within the context of an interdependent world we have collective responsibility, guided by the framework of international conventions, to manage and develop resources in a manner conducive to achieving long-term sustainability.

Through effective international and regional cooperation we will be able to meet our obligations as custodians of our biological resources by pursuing policies and strategies that would facilitate sustainable development.

At this crucial juncture in human history we are compelled by social and economic imperatives, characterized by growing poverty and marginalization of the powerless and the weak, to choose a course of action that will empower the citizens of the world to develop their full potential in order to enable them to secure their basic needs and improve their livelihood.

The commitment of resources at both the national and international levels ought to be focused on the development of programmes that place priority on the development of human capacities, and removing institutional and infrastructural impediments in order to facilitate sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

Given the current international climate, my country strongly deplores the actions of some nuclear-weapon States in continuing their nuclear-weapon testing, acting contrary to the spirit and objectives of the recently extended Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The oceans of the South Pacific hold one of mankind's unique resources of biological wealth. Continuous nuclear testing within this very sensitive and environmentally vulnerable region not only directly threatens our common heritage but also threatens the basic survival of the Pacific island people. The action of these countries is a backward step which directly undermines the confidence given to the nuclear non-proliferation regime and hence threatens international peace and security.

We support the call for the reform of the United Nations to make it more efficient, responsive, and capable of meeting the multifaceted demands prompted by a rapidly changing international environment. We therefore agree that the United Nations future destiny lies in the hands of its Members.

Such a process of reform, however, should not be compromised by the dictates of the powerful. Consensus on the goals and objectives of United Nations reform should reflect the needs and aspirations of all Member States, and especially the particular needs of developing countries.

The United Nations has a pivotal role to play in shaping positive visions to guide international relations. The values of democracy, interdependence, tolerance and respect for diversity should be upheld in the interests of all Member States.

From this perspective Papua New Guinea supports the Secretary-General's efforts to define a new paradigm for development which emphasizes the empowerment of people and focuses on the human dimensions of development and on securing the basic needs of people and communities. Such a development concept can be pursued effectively through the framework of global governance based on the principle sof equity and justice.

The United Nations must be strengthened to continue its work to defend the rights of the underprivileged and the powerless and to promote universal values that would embrace diversity and ensure world peace and security.

In conclusion, may I on behalf of my Prime Minister, The Right Honourable Sir Julius Chan, and the people of Papua New Guinea reaffirm our continuing commitment and support for the work of the United Nations and assure the Assembly that we will do our utmost to uphold the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter with God's help.

The Republic of Djibouti

Address by
H.E. Mr. Roble Olhaye,
Chairman of the Delegation

His Excellency President Hassan Gouled Aptidon, on behalf of the people of Djibouti, is pleased to extend his warmest greetings to fellow Heads of State and Government and to all who are gathered here to celebrate this important milestone, the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization. Recognition must also be given to the untiring leadership of our Secretary-General, and to the dedicated efforts of the Secretariat of the United Nations whose management of this event has been so exemplary. Ambassador Butler of Australia and his Committee have also to be thanked for so diligently preserving the significance of this occasion.

The last 50 years have been momentous ones for mankind. During that time the United Nations has in large part managed to maintain a significant level of international cooperation. This is an achievement worthy of recognition and appreciation. True, the United Nations and its predecessor, the League of Nations, were erected by the victors in the aftermath of global wars, essentially to prevent a repetition of similar catastrophes. But at its formation in San Francisco in 1945, the United Nations was seen as more than an instrument of collective security. It was to embody the collective hopes and aspirations of mankind and to serve as a forum of final resort for States in the throes of an uncertain post-war period. The early post-war period also witnessed the realization of a need to protect not simply nation-States, but the rights of the individual as well, as enshrined in the historic Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.

The demise of the cold war, with its rigid control over political change both within and between States, has unleashed a period of considerable ethnic and political conflict within States. Designated almost by default to settle these issues, the United Nations has seen its traditional peace-keeping role stretched beyond its limits, having lacked the capacity, experience or resources to cope with these new phenomena. Mandates for peace-keeping have often been too weak, inarticulate or deliberately confused, even as the relatively mundane activity of peace-keeping rapidly became a key instrument of the United Nations system.

But the persistence of conflict, particularly in Bosnia and Somalia, has sapped the political will of the United Nations to stay the course. Without a doubt, the atrocities and mayhem inflicted on a whole segment of the population in Rwanda will always haunt the United Nations. Ironically, we have returned to that somewhat indecisive, almost ineffective, posture of the cold-war era, and this is a situation of concern to many who look to the collective-security promise of the United Nations Charter for survival. Will mankind's future now be one filled with more Bosnias and Somalias, one of dangerous and unresolved conflicts, one where the United Nations shies away from disarming belligerents or protecting innocent civilians because of a lack of the right mandates, adequate resources and, of course, political will on the part of the international community?

For us in the Horn of Africa, long plagued by natural disasters and the residual effects of the cold war, there is a recovery in sight at long last. But the tragedy of Somalia cannot simply be abandoned. It cannot wither away, or even slowly die, and with it the whole region suffers. It is unfathomable that a country that has been a Member of this Organization since 1960 is sadly and conspicuously absent today. Let us ponder this anomaly as we continue to commemorate this fiftieth anniversary.

Our world is moving on, evolving in ways barely perceptible 50 years ago. Colonial empires have been dismantled, the cold war has ended, and mankind has struck out in search of new identities and structures. Rapid technological, economic and political changes have complicated the ability of States to control their own direction, while some have fallen considerably behind in the race for development. The inevitable uncertainties have provided opportunities for many unscrupulous groups to fan the flames of discontent in a rush to power. Once again we have come to realize there is seldom peace without development; democracy is simply another name for peace with development.

The sheer breadth of change and people-focused development have created new social realities, as well as demands from people never heard before. The United Nations thematic global conferences of the 1990s have given a significant voice to many of these suppressed groups and issues and have woven a common thread of concern to improve the lot of the world's majority. Hidden problems of health, education, poverty, environment, women and human and social rights are now glaringly public and unavoidable and call for new approaches to international cooperation and governance.

Certainly, the physical life of the individual has improved during the past half century. The spread of disease is much better controlled, and standards are now higher. Even in Africa, the last of the world's continents to take off economically, life expectancy climbed by 25 per cent between 1960 and 1992, and adult literacy doubled, to 54 per cent, in the last two decades.

While we are far from being a totally healthy and socially productive world, at least the possibility is irrefutable.

Fifty years ago, a mere 51 States began the United Nations. Today, with "nation inflation", we are 185 Members. In a world so different in so many ways, few would argue that the United Nations must be reformed if it is to remain relevant to the essential hope and vision of its founders for a better world. But it needs stable resources, reordered priorities and more relevant and representative structures. Reform which addresses both global developments and the structural inadequacies of the United Nations must be given priority, or the Organization may soon become incapable of addressing the real global problems of disease, hunger, poverty, development, conflict, security and national breakdown, which can only lead to continued international chaos and decline.

As a small nation, Djibouti is a firm believer in the United Nations system. The United Nations is the most important vehicle we have today to enable us to forge a new international system anchored in justice and equity. Its survival is crucial to our well-being. Let us renew our dedication to keep this superb vessel afloat, for the consequences of not doing so would be tragic.

23. The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Address by
H.E. Mrs. Annette des Iles,
Chairperson of the Delegation

I bring to the General Assembly, on the occasion of this golden-jubilee Special Commemorative Meeting, the greetings and good wishes of the Government and the people of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Fifty years ago, in the aftermath of the Second World War, the international community, "determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war", resolved at San Francisco to create an Organization that would establish the political, economic and social conditions for a new and lasting peace. This resolve remains as relevant and valid in 1995 as it was in 1945.

Trinidad and Tobago joined the United Nations in 1962, 17 years after this Organization had been founded. As a small, developing State we saw in the principle of collective security enshrined in the Charter a bastion for small States, whose sovereignty and strength must be sustained by the rule of law. Today, as in 1962, we reaffirm our deep commitment to the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter.

For Trinidad and Tobago, as for the great majority of the Member States which make up this Organization, our first responsibility is to our people: to provide an acceptable standard of living and an improved quality of life for all our citizens, including our young people and our women. It follows that in countries such as ours, this Organization will be judged largely by the extent to which it can assist in this effort. We wish to urge, therefore, that international cooperation for development be placed at the centre of the activities of the United Nations.

As we mark the fiftieth anniversary year of our Organization, the United Nations and its specialized agencies can be justifiably proud of many of their achievements, in the fields of decolonization, the eradication of apartheid, the promotion of democracy and human rights and the development of international law and the inestimable and often unheralded work done in such areas as health, education and humanitarian assistance.

There is indeed no alternative to the United Nations. Yet it is also true that, as we face the daunting array of challenges that confront today's world, there is a crisis of commitment to the United Nations, a crisis of confidence in the Organization.

Let this solemn commemoration and this fiftieth anniversary year help us to overcome our difficulties and equip the United Nations to face the future.

Let us summon the political will and determination needed in order to succeed.

Let us develop a true spirit of global partnership based on mutual trust and respect which is essential in today's global neighbourhood.

Let us imbue our deliberations with a greater sense of mission and clarity of purpose.

Let us place people, in particular, the less fortunate and the most vulnerable of the world's peoples, at the centre of our concerns.

Let us resolve to use the lessons derived from 50 years of experience to confront the myriad and complex challenges before us.

Let us not be afraid to re-examine concepts and adopt new approaches in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter.

Let us, above all, provide the Organization with the financial and material resources required for the many complex and varied tasks which it must perform.

24. The Independent State of Western Samoa

Address by
H.E. Mr. Tuiloma Neroni Slade,
Chairman of the Delegation

A better world was sought 50 years ago. There was need to restructure from the devastation of war a new order premised on peace, justice and well-being for all.

That we are able to meet here today, a vastly increased United Nations, is surely testimony to our endeavours. The dramatic transformation of the world's political map and membership of the Organization from the 51 States which first met as the General Assembly to almost fourfold today, enriched by observer States and organizations, brings us nearer to the goal of universality.

My own country, like so many in this Hall, came to independence through the process of decolonization made possible only through the central role played by the United Nations. That process was a historic achievement. The international consciousness and the moral and the political underpinnings forged are with us today. It is one of the many achievements of our first 50 years that we bear in mind as we celebrate.

Samoa judges by its experience. We found the League of Nations unresponsive and we were disillusioned. The United Nations was truer to our aspirations. Today, the United Nations remains a significant part of the modern development and progress of my country.

It is therefore with complete faith that on this occasion Samoa renews its commitment to the Charter. We do so as a small country and with abiding trust in the principles set out in the Charter. The principles are sound; what is missing is the will to apply them.

We believe very deeply in the sustaining power of international law in support of the Charter principles. The United Nations has been a necessary and a cohesive force in the elaboration of international law and the rules for international cooperation which now regulate a phenomenal range of human activity.

An important development in recent years has been the very high rate of State-party adherence to international instruments and the acceptance of international programmes on the environment and sustainable development and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other areas.

Much more, though, is needed by way of concrete action in compliance with treaty obligations; it is also necessary to implement Agenda 21 and other agreed programmes of action like that on the sustainable development of small island States.

Samoa prays for the day of effective disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons. A comprehensive treaty on the banning of nuclear testing next year is a first priority. We welcome the announced intention of France, the United Kingdom and the United States to adhere to the South Pacific nuclear-free zone Treaty. But we need to say again to France that we condemn its nuclear explosions in the Pacific. They are dangerous experiments posing a very serious threat to the health and the environment of my country and our region, and must stop. Of the entire United Nations membership, Samoa is located closest to the test site.

World peace and the conditions for peace are not to hand. Too many are without human security. We think far too much is still being spent on armies than on the environment, education and health. More than half of the world's population is without food. And some countries are three thousand times more prosperous than others. Science, technology and industrial progress remain in the hands of too few.

These are awesome challenges that must remain for tomorrow, recognizing that it is perhaps easier to diagnose the world's problems than to find the solutions, and easier to formulate solutions than to get the public to accept them. Solutions are beyond the capacity of individual States; they must remain the object of United Nations focus and action.

It is all too tempting to the sceptic to retreat from support and to lay the failures at the door of the United Nations. But it is unfair to do so. The power of correction lies not here, but in capitals. We now have an Organization structured by a few, half a century ago, that has to respond to the needs of many more, and to a world, and to world forces, which are fundamentally different and which continue to change. It needs to be reformed and assured the financial resources it needs, and strengthened to prepare it for the years ahead.

Membership of the Security Council must be enlarged to reflect the realities of the present time and to enhance its effectiveness and legitimacy.

Assuredly, this also is an occasion of thanksgiving — to the Secretary-General, and all who support him at Headquarters, to the entire United Nations staff worldwide, and to all Member States who toil in this Hall and in many similar halls all over the world, daily, year in, year out.

We do not make little of the disappointments and of the failures. But, with the five decades of achievements, and a world of infinite promise, Samoa is very firmly of the view that the future is on the side of the United Nations.

25. League of Arab States

Address by
H.E. Mr. Mahmoud Aboul-Nasr,
Chairman of the Delegation

[Delivered in Arabic]

The Arab States celebrate two important occasions this year. While we participate in the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we have celebrated, very recently, the fiftieth anniversary of the League of Arab States, the Arab regional organization which was born just a few months before the establishment of the United Nations. The League's charter included many principles and purposes that were proclaimed shortly thereafter by the Charter of the United Nations. The Arab States participated in the drafting of the United Nations Charter and have taken part in the work of the Organization for the past 50 years. Today, the Arab States, like all other Member States, look forward to a new phase, a phase in which, we hope, peace and justice will prevail and in which human rights and man's fundamental freedoms will be respected all over the world. We look forward to a new phase in which the old colonialist concepts will disappear together with the logic of aggression, the use of force and the occupation of the lands of others.

We look forward, at the threshold of the third millennium, to an era in which every nation would be able to enjoy social and genuine cultural and economic development; an era in which every State would abide by the United Nations Charter; an era in which every United Nations resolution would be implemented without distinction and without the application of double standards; an era in which every people without distinction, would enjoy just and lasting peace; an era in which every State would support the efforts of the United Nations and share in improving its performance so that it may be able to do all that is expected of it, especially in the areas of peacemaking, peace-keeping and prosperity.

We look forward to a United Nations that will build on its undeniable achievements in such areas as decolonization, the codification of the norms of cooperation between States in many areas, such as the environment, outer space, the seas, human rights, trade and arms control, and many others. Those past achievements of the United Nations are a source of hope. They strengthen our resolve to score further successes.

While we in the Arab world would welcome all the steps that have been taken towards the achievement of a peaceful settlement to the Palestinian question and the Middle East problem, we look forward to the completion of the steps needed for the establishment in our region of a just and lasting peace that would be founded on the principles decided by the United Nations. We are determined to oppose the attempts to marginalize the Organization's important role in the quest for the desired solutions. No matter what sort of criticism might be levelled at the United Nations, we cannot but recognize that the Organization has been and will continue to be the international forum wherein all States can participate in promoting the sort of international relations that would be based on justice and equality.

Today, as we congratulate the Organization on the passage of 50 years since its establishment, we must seize the unique opportunity of the presence of such an impressive number of Heads of State and Government to take stock of the realities of the new international milieu we all live in particularly in the light of the fundamental changes that have taken place over the past few years. In so doing, we have to benefit from the object-lessons of the past, cherish the achievements that have been made and, thereby, manage to enrich the twenty-first century with a United Nations that is adequately equipped with the means and the machineries that would enable it to serve the peoples in whose name it was created.

In conclusion, may I, on behalf of the Secretary-General of the Arab League, extend to you, Mr. President, and to the United Nations Secretary-General our most sincere congratulations, and assurances of the Arab League's continued cooperation with this international Organization in the service of the common cause of the two organizations: peace and development.

26. European Community

Address by
H.E. Mr. Hans van den Broek,
Member of the European Commission

It is an honour to address this Assembly on behalf of the European Community. It is indeed a unique opportunity to highlight the achievements of the United Nations and to give new impetus to its future work.

Undoubtedly the achievements of the past are impressive. The United Nations has contributed vastly to the maintenance of international peace and security, and it has been a vital player in the fields of disarmament, non-proliferation and development cooperation. The United Nations has been at the forefront in the promotion of human rights, the eradication of disease and the protection of the environment. The United Nations has been playing a crucial role in alleviating the plight of refugees and in supplying humanitarian aid all over the world. It has embodied some of the purest and noblest aspirations of mankind's perennial quest for freedom and prosperity.

I would therefore like to pay tribute to the United Nations and to its successive Secretaries-General for all that has been achieved despite so many difficulties and obstacles.

But the present agenda of the United Nations has become more complex and more demanding than at any other time in the Organization's history. Instability has entrenched itself in many parts of the world. We have been witnessing the revival of nationalisms, of ethnic cleansing, of unprecedented humanitarian crises, of gross violations of human rights, and even of genocide. The world therefore needs the United Nations today more than ever — a strong and effective United Nations adapted to the new agenda, unhampered by the ideological controversies of the past.

However, the United Nations can only be as strong and effective as its Members permit. This also applies to its financial means. It would indeed be more than appropriate to mark this commemoration by putting the Organization again on a sound financial footing.

The European Community has frequently expressed its full support for United Nations ideals and action. When the United Nations was established half a century ago it enshrined the hopes of people who wished to prevent war, who had faith in human rights and who were committed to economic and social progress. Those who founded the European Community were driven by a similar vision. Hence, it was natural to develop a close partnership with the United Nations.

This partnership has been translated into many hard facts. Let me mention just a few of them. The European Community, through its Humanitarian Office, is the second-largest single contributor to, and operational partner in, the work of the High Commissioner for Refugees and is one of the largest donors to the World Food Programme. Half of the world's trade subject to preferential treatment for developing countries is being carried out by the Community. The European Community and its member States give about half of the world's total official development assistance.

We must now agree on an innovative agenda for development. This agenda must, as far as we are concerned, send two strong messages. The first message is of the crucial need to put international cooperation for development at the centre of our common endeavours. The second message concerns the enhancement of the role and effectiveness of the United Nations in development. Our efforts will build upon the outcome of recent global conferences. Economic growth, social justice, the empowerment of women, the protection of the environment, democratic institutions and the promotion of all human rights must be seen as fundamental components of a common vision for a sustainable development.

The Commission of the European Union is determined to enhance its support for the United Nations. Our aim is to make the Organization more effective, more capable of shaping a better and safer world and more operational in ensuring freedom and prosperity for all.

27. Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation

Address by
H.E. Dr. Émile Derlin Zinsou,
President of the Permanent Council of Francophonie

[*Delivered in French*]

Not long ago, this Assembly considered a draft resolution, submitted by the group of countries whose common language is French, concerning cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation. In adopting that resolution, the Assembly demonstrated its interest in the community of francophone countries, which I represent here today. I extend our warmest thanks.

I am greatly honoured to tell this Assembly of the sustained attention with which the 47 States and Governments that make up our community follow and support, within the framework of the francophone community, the aims and initiatives of this Organization, to which I pay a solemn tribute and whose vitality on the eve of the third millennium is so clearly reflected in the celebration of its fiftieth anniversary today.

The francophone community sees itself above all as a place of solidarity. It finds unity in the diversity of its membership, which extends to every continent. In this United Nations, a lofty forum for dialogue, and especially for North-South dialogue, my presence attests to one of the fundamental dimensions of that community, most of whose members are from the South. The principal aim of our solidarity is development, the key factor for stability and security in today's world.

We wish our activities to be consonant with the crises besetting the contemporary world. We are devoting our priority efforts to promoting democracy, the rule of law and human rights, in the belief that no society can evolve towards economic and human development without a stable and legally appropriate policy framework. In this regard, we are striving to direct our efforts increasingly towards conflict prevention. The francophone community intends shortly to step up its efforts in this field.

We wish to be ready to meet the major challenges of the twenty-first century, such as control of demographic shifts, the maintenance of peace, environmental protection or the struggle against such terrible scourges as AIDS and drugs. Our presence in Rio, Vienna, Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing at the world conferences organized by the United Nations on problems familiar to us all and our community's contribution to building the consensuses achieved there and their follow-up attest to that resolve.

We are aware of the difficulties and even the paradoxes involved in many situations. Let me cite but two examples on my own continent, Africa. How can we fail to see that the movement towards democracy, so eagerly initiated, has bogged down in ever-proliferating conflicts? How can one fail to note that the efforts being made to protect the environment are being increasingly hampered by drought, famine and creeping desertification in our countries?

Such examples enable us to gauge the uncertain results of our efforts, but we are all the more resolved to pursue them, knowing that they are shared, with the same determination, by the entire international community. Moreover, by honouring us with his presence at the Fifth Conference of Heads of State and Government of the countries with French as a common language, which was held in October 1993 in Mauritius, the Secretary-General gave us the opportunity to define our common ground and to confirm the francophone community's full support for his work. I wish here once again to pay a tribute to his endeavours and to tell him how enthusiastically we look forward to reaffirming our support for him at the forthcoming summit to be hosted by my country, the Republic of Benin, in early December 1995.

The extent to which the objectives of our group and those of the United Nations coincide is evident. It has become even more apparent since the francophone community strengthened its political activities by initiating the summit meetings of Heads of State and Government. This common ground must become even more tangible from this day forth. The member countries of the francophone world, together with the entire international community, would greatly benefit thereby.

It is true that the francophone countries are relying on their specific solidarity — the foundation of their union on the basis of their mission, the francophone movement — in order to create an entity for cooperation that can act as a credible partner in the new world order. But their future remains closely linked to that of the entire international community. The interdependence which today more than ever is a feature of international relations makes the development of some dependent on that of the rest. This encompasses all the problems of globalization and marginalization to which the Secretary-General has referred with such conviction in his address at this Commemorative Meeting.

It is in this spirit that the francophone community is preparing to play an active role at the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements in Istanbul next year. The value of that Conference and the issues at stake cannot leave us indifferent. Indeed, they touch on the very context within which our societies will evolve in the future.

We wish this shared aspiration to be squarely placed in the common service of progress, peace and development in the world. This is the role and duty which the francophone community increasingly seeks to perform in the family of nations. It is the meaning of the resolution adopted by our Heads of

State and Government in Mauritius on francophonie and international relations, in which they reaffirmed their resolute support, alongside other international bodies, for the efforts to find appropriate solutions to major political and economic problems affecting the contemporary world and stated their determination to develop, alongside and within those bodies and during the great world Conferences, continued and enhanced francophone cooperation.

This is the objective of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation in establishing representations with international organizations in Geneva since 1991, in Brussels since last year and, most recently, in New York with the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Our message is thus a message of hope in the future of the United Nations and of our own resolve fully to participate in the universal consciousness that shines over the work of the United Nations. It is our purpose thereby to contribute to the great value of this institution as a meeting place for the world's cultures and civilizations and the instrument of choice for the advancement of peace and development in the world.

Commonwealth Secretariat

Address by
H.E. Chief Emeka Anyaoku, Secretary-General

A decade ago, in commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, Commonwealth leaders, in their Nassau Declaration on World Order, affirmed their commitment to the goal of strengthening the United Nations system as the central instrument of peace, security and cooperation. On this historic fiftieth anniversary, I am honoured to reaffirm that solemn commitment and support.

The Commonwealth has representation from every continent. It includes people of the world's major races, religions, cultures and traditions. Its member countries are at every stage of socio-economic development and comprise more than one quarter of the United Nation's membership. The Commonwealth is, therefore, more than a regional group; it is a global subsystem in the world community.

The importance which Commonwealth Governments accord to the United Nations is a testimony of their commitment to multilateralism. Commonwealth leaders were among the visionaries who framed and signed the United Nations Charter. And Commonwealth countries continue to contribute to the work of the Organization in many significant areas, including peace-keeping operations, in which Commonwealth countries rank among the leading troop contributors.

The Charter of the United Nations has endured for 50 years and provided inspiration for many seminal achievements. To mention but a few, the United Nations has contributed to the process of decolonization; provided a means of conflict resolution and containment; facilitated the development and extension of international law; and provided a means of mobilizing world concern and action on a range of global problems such as the environment, disarmament, trade and development, and human rights.

In the dramatically transformed global environment of the post-cold-war era, the Organization has been obliged to make unprecedented and far-reaching decisions in response to the mounting incidence of intra-State conflict and strife. International attention is rightly focusing not only on how to tackle such situations, but, more important, on how to prevent them from arising in the first place.

Faced with new challenges and opportunities, it is right that the reform and adaptation of the United Nations should have become a pressing priority. Numerous proposals have been made for structural, programmatic and managerial reform of the United Nations, its organs and its agencies, including the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Bretton Woods institutions. But, whatever the merit of any individual proposals, the underlying imperative must be a recognition that the institutions and arrangements fashioned 50 years ago, in the age of colonialism and in the aftermath of a hugely destructive world war, are scarcely adequate to the demands of the present age. That is why the Commonwealth supports meaningful and speedy reform. A strong and effective United Nations is crucial to building a more humane world order.

The United Nations is the globe's only truly universal Organization, held by Member States in trust for the world's people. We hold firmly that the effectiveness of the Organization is directly linked to the commitment and support of its constituents. The commitment of all Member States — including those of the Commonwealth — to the United Nations should reflect their determination to strengthen it and make it the dynamic and strong Organization which they have consistently advocated.

And so, as we celebrate this fiftieth anniversary, the task before Member States is to enhance the capacity of the Organization to respond to the problems at hand. This requires us to update its system and to ensure that we meet our obligations to enable it to face the challenges of the next 50 years.

E. Statements delivered at the 39th plenary meeting held on 24 October 1995

1. The Republic of Suriname

Address by
H.E. Mr. Runaldo Ronald Venetiaan, President

It is an honour for me to address the General Assembly today, on the birthday of the United Nations. In the past 50 years the United Nations has guided the peoples of the world past the cliffs of the cold war between East and West, through regional conflicts and the many eruptions of uncounted dormant controversies among groups within a given nation, and also through the dark depths of poverty, disease, discrimination and ignorance.

In confronting these challenges the United Nations has given individuals and institutions, Governments and non-governmental organizations the opportunity to come forward and distinguish themselves as true servants of humanity, and as workers for peace, for justice and for well-being. The contribution of our Organization of nations has ensured that the suffering of the world owing to natural disasters and caused by human beings themselves has not become a source of despair for humanity. The endeavours of the United Nations have generated positive expectations for harmony among human beings and for harmony between humankind and nature.

In this spirit, the Government and the people of Suriname congratulate the United Nations on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary, and, filled with hope, they face the future together with the Organization. This, however, does not mean that Suriname wishes to ignore the reality of the many threats which endanger our world and the problems the United Nations has to face within its own structure.

There are still many obstacles to overcome in the political, economic and social spheres and in the quest of the international community for a more just, equitable, secure, peaceful and democratic world. The eruption of extreme nationalism, ethnic strife and excessive religious zeal multiplies tension, tears societies and States apart, and threatens world security. Economic and social imbalances still deprive the majority of humankind of development and progress.

Agreed strategies, such as those aimed at curbing population growth or at protecting the environment, are sometimes, for reasons of political or economic competition, affected by hidden agendas, with a view to controlling the political and economic progress of developing countries.

The United Nations system has proven to be a major mechanism at the international level, creative enough to put a common vision and a common approach into effect through multilateral cooperation combining collective action with respect for national sovereignty.

We call upon the international community to contribute fully to the definition and implementation of the new role of the United Nations, which undoubtedly is of a humanitarian nature, and aims at protecting and preserving life on our planet and at raising the standard of living of all peoples, through the establishment of a new, balanced and equitable international economic and social order.

There is no doubt that unless we overcome and rectify certain shortcomings of the United Nations, this Organization will not be able to play its fundamental role in the management of the new world order; neither will it be able to realize its noble principles. Thus, a most urgent task for the international community now is to reinvigorate, restructure and democratize the United Nations and to give it a sound a financial basis for the fulfilment of old and new tasks, in order to relieve international relations of suspicion and hostility, to bring an end to violence, and to fully activate the creative potential of the United Nations for the sound development of the peoples of the world.

We, the family of nations, with political will and in a spirit of understanding, can successfully chart the course of the world towards an order which will be more responsive to the needs and interests of humankind.

The Republic of Guatemala

Address by
H.E. Mr. Ramiro De León Carpio, President

[Delivered in Spanish]

Guatemala, which has participated in the work of the United Nations from the first, is present today at this unique congress, which has brought together world leaders to reaffirm the purposes and principles of the San Francisco Charter. The founders were mindful of the tragedy of the two world wars; to ward off similar wars, they created a forum for dialogue and the harmonization of policies, set forth principles for the peaceful settlement of disputes and charged an executive body with responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. But they also sought to create a new order based on justice for all peoples and nations great and small, affirming their common right to live in the same conditions of security, harmony and freedom.

There can never be justice or peace if we deny the right of every human being and every nation to engage in dialogue on a footing of equality and above all to enjoy the identical dignity without which no member of our species can truly be free, without the shackles of poverty and without the bitterness of the hatred engendered by inequality. This is why we believe that universal representation should prevail at the United Nations, without any kind of exclusion.

Let us begin, then, by recognizing that we still have some way to go before we can affirm that peace has been attained. We still endure bloody conflicts that must be brought to an end once and for all, because they are anachronistic, because they are anti-economic, because they are unjust, because they are immoral, but above all because they are inhuman. But peace is not merely the absence of war. Peace is also economic and social, and in this connection we, the least developed nations, have merely asked to be allowed to compete in conditions of fairness, so that our products may have access to the market without being subject to any unjustifiable barriers or conditions not based on economic considerations.

His Holiness Pope John Paul II, who in this Hall made a dramatic appeal for an end to injustice between men and between nations, affirmed that development is the new name of peace. It will never be possible to achieve this peace unless the national policies of the strongest and most powerful countries are promptly transformed into positive action towards democratic consolidation, leading, certainly, to economic globalization, but also to political and social globalization; ensuring economic growth, but growth with a human and a social face, enabling poor countries to attain the true independence and sovereign equality to which we are all fully entitled.

We are met to evaluate our Organization; we must admit our mistakes, and learn from them, but we must also recognize the effects of a general peace, which give us the time and space to address the human problems of poverty, inequality and injustice, which from the very birth of this institution have been an essential part of its agenda, but which still recur with tragic frequency.

With the fall of the Berlin wall the cold war came to an end without bloodshed. We face a new reality that lays a heavy responsibility on large economic blocs, which must have due regard for the ordeals our societies have endured. Above all, we must recall the tragic lessons we have learned and realize that justice cannot be built on inequality, that, similarly, peace cannot be built on hatred, and that democracy can be made effective and functional only through the sum of the actions we take to promote it, without ever resorting to the excuse that we have started a war or committed an injustice to preserve that democracy.

I wish finally to say that soon the people of Guatemala will freely elect a new Chief Executive, to whom I shall hand over the presidency, with the satisfaction of having headed a transitional Government that has fulfilled the primary mandate with which it was entrusted — to rescue, preserve and strengthen institutional legality and democracy, both of which had been seriously impaired — and also with the satisfaction of having, through the democratic process of consulting the people, removed corrupt members of Congress and the Supreme Court from office. I shall relinquish the presidency with the satisfaction of being able to say to the world that, by dint of strenuous efforts, we have made headway in the observance of human rights, which have suffered such serious breaches in Guatemala. We are still experiencing difficulties; but Guatemala is not what it used to be. I shall, finally, leave office with the further satisfaction of having strengthened civilian authority, assigning to the army the role that it should play in a democratic system, and initiating national reconciliation. To this should be added my satisfaction at having fought poverty, corruption, drug-related activities, terrorism and impunity.

But having expressed my satisfaction at these favourable developments, as President of all Guatemalans and as ex-Ombudsman for human rights I must also share with you the anguish and sadness I feel because my countrymen continue to suffer death, desolation, destruction and the bereavement of widows and orphans, all of which is the result of a foreign war that hurled us into the vortex of an internal conflict that has raged for 35 years. This entitles me to make a fervent appeal to the General Assembly for this community to strengthen and support us in our ongoing peace process, not only by fulfilling the institutional obligation that the Organization has assumed, but also with the open hand of international solidarity in the political and economic fields.

Human life is being lost. The guns must fall silent.

3. The Republic of Costa Rica

Address by
H.E. Mr. José María Figueres Olsen, Constitutional President

[*Delivered in Spanish*]

We have come here to celebrate together 50 years of the United Nations. Many of us agree that this is the right time to pause and consider the achievements and the shortcomings of this Organization. It is also an excellent opportunity to look at new dreams and challenges for the future.

We all recognize that in these past 50 years the United Nations has, at decisive moments, been able to tilt the world towards peace and solidarity.

Costa Rica has participated from the beginning as a founder of this Organization. Trusting in it, we abolished our army two years after the founding of the United Nations. Since then we have lived in peace. Not having an army has enabled us to invest more resources in health, education and housing. According to United Nations indicators, this year Costa Rica came first in human development in Latin America.

When, in Costa Rica, we were thinking about how to celebrate this fiftieth anniversary which has brought us together today, we had the idea of proclaiming an international week for peace. Our proposal was approved unanimously by all the countries represented here, and we would like to thank those who joined in or supported this initiative, which begins today.

In these 50 years, and particularly in the last few years, the region of Central America has also made major progress. We have moved from an authoritarian Central America divided by war to a democratic and united Central America which today is building its future through a regional alliance for sustainable development.

Its central objective is the greater well-being of our people. It therefore includes the preservation of the cultural identity of indigenous peoples and the full involvement of women in the development process. This latter aspect may be one of the most powerful instruments for combatting poverty. But the alliance goes further: looking to the future, it includes universal environmental concerns such as the preservation of biodiversity, the ozone layer and the seas.

This fiftieth anniversary comes at a time of transition for the world, and also coincides with Costa Rica's assumption of the presidency of the Group of 77 and China for the coming year. The Group of 77, which was born within the context of the United Nations to combat economic injustices among strong and weaker nations, already has a distinguished history. Yet, on the threshold of a new millennium, its main challenge persists and its dreams have not yet come true.

The trend towards the globalization of the economy could generate advantages for all humanity. But the struggle between powerful trade blocs has increased the injustices among nations. Much is being said today about free trade, but in actual fact those countries that have less not only have to struggle over prices for their products, but they also have to face new trade barriers. They are required to comply very strictly with international norms, while the more powerful are allowed to depart from the agreements they have signed.

We must not give up on the dreams of the Group of 77 and China. We must reaffirm those dreams, and we must find new ways of making them come true.

Accordingly, the United Nations must strengthen the forums for negotiation, dialogue and the quest for agreement. To remain true to the spirit of San Francisco, which gave birth to this Organization, it must not remain neutral or passive in the face of major conflicts. Rather, it should do more. The new challenges include assuming responsibility for protecting and preserving global assets. Only an Organization that represents equally all the peoples of the earth can be successful in this undertaking. We dream of a United Nations that encourages forums of cooperation among all nations to reduce the greenhouse effect, to save, study and make use of the biodiversity of the planet, to decontaminate the seas and, thereby, to ensure the greater well-being of present and future generations.

Today let us think of our peoples. Let us renew our commitment to work in the United Nations to move towards a world of peace, equity and solidarity, advancing along the road towards sustainable development.

4. The Republic of Panama

Address by
H.E. Dr. Ernesto Pérez Balladares, Constitutional President

[*Delivered in Spanish*]

Events such as this are taking place these days in many of our countries, including my own, not so much to mark an anniversary as to thank the United Nations for all it has done in helping to fashion today's world.

Injustice still persists, poverty is endemic in vast regions of the world, respect for human rights for many of its inhabitants is no more than a dream and wars have not completely vanished. But, despite this apparently bleak picture, we should ask ourselves what our world would be like with the destructive power of nuclear weapons and without the United Nations.

The genuinely far-reaching importance of the Organization can be measured not in terms that are quantifiable, but in terms of intangible but real values: the wars that were never fought, the victims that never died because of them, the children who were not orphaned because their parents did not have to die in a war that no one understood.

When we look at the record of these 50 years, many will say that the Organization has been an arena for sterile debate, but it is preferable for the world to have a forum in which conflicts can spend themselves in words rather than constantly to seek battlefields on which to resolve disputes of its own invention. It is better for the world to have an Organization awash with words rather than battlefields strewn with the dead.

Panama is a signatory of the Organization's Charter and enjoys the rare honour of having had a Security Council meeting take place on its soil, for when every diplomatic channel seemed closed to my country the holding of a Council meeting away from Headquarters brought Panama's claims concerning the Canal to the world's attention to an unprecedented degree. A few years later we saw the conclusion of negotiations which terminated a colonial jurisdiction, known as the Canal Zone, and we are now about to begin — it will happen before the end of the century — to operate and administer the inter-oceanic waterway. For this reason we also ask ourselves whether our future would today be as promising had this forum not existed, this unique body in which the rift of differences, however wide, can be bridged and in which discussions can take place between Governments on an equal footing however unequal they may be in terms of wealth or military might.

It is not the world that has grown since Panama together with some 50 other countries, signed the United Nations Charter 50 years ago. What has grown is the number of States that have become independent and welcomed into this Organization; what has grown is the hopes of millions of young people no longer faced with the cruel prospect of dying in senseless and meaningless wars. What perhaps best demonstrates the changes that the world has undergone in this half century since the Second World War is that two of the nations upon whose military defeats the Organization was based today justifiably aspire to become permanent members of the Security Council, and that the language of exclusion has given way to the of universalization of this body.

Our commitment to the United Nations is to help make its mission effective in the next 50 years. We do the Organization no service by blaming it for its mistakes or being content with its many successes. The Organization helped to heal the wounds of a world war; now it must help to bridge the ever-widening technological and educational gulf between its Member nations. The poor countries — the majority of the countries — do not aspire to bring their armies up to the levels of the military Powers, but they have abundant reason for hoping that the insuperable gap in terms of technology and military power will not also become an unbridgeable educational abyss.

If this purpose is fulfilled to an acceptable degree, those who come here to celebrate the centenary of the Organization in the year 2045 will have as many reasons for being grateful to it as today's generation has, for having spared the world the horrors of a war which might well have spelt the end of mankind.

5. The Republic of Venezuela

Address by
H.E. Dr. Rafael Caldera, President

[Delivered in Spanish]

On 11 November 1918 the world joyfully greeted the end of the First World War. The winner set themselves the goal of laying the foundation for everlasting peace. The League of Nations was created in Geneva; political maps were modified, great empires were broken up and the principle of nationalities was applied to establish the limits of States.

Twenty years later a conflagration broke out, of such magnitude that the horrors of the earlier war seemed to pale in comparison. When this conflict ended there was enormous fear of a relapse. A third world war would inevitably have meant the total annihilation of the human race. The weapons of destruction went beyond what man's imagination could have conceived. Astonishingly, man revealed himself capable of successfully devising the instruments for his own destruction.

Simply having avoided the dreadful possibility of a new catastrophe is sufficient justification for this celebration today. There are reasons to congratulate ourselves on this meaningful fiftieth anniversary, in whose success we all share fully. We cannot deny that the threat of nuclear war was a decisive factor for peace, but so also was the existence of this forum, where all nations, large and small, from all continents and of all ethnic descents, can state their views, their demands, their aspirations and their complaints.

The unexpected end of the cold war opened the door to new dreams. However, subsequent events have shown the need to face new and emerging situations across the world so that peace, the fundamental purpose of the Organization, may be strengthened and built on secure and stable foundations.

A new half century is beginning for the United Nations. We must prepare the Organization for a new era with a new agenda. We must analyse in depth the causes of instability and find ways of ensuring peace. The Holy Father, John Paul II, spoke in this very forum of the need to guarantee the human rights of nations in order to complement the human rights of people, proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of 1948.

I believe that among the human rights of nations, we should give special attention to those relating to international social justice which recognizes the right of every people to promote its development on its own terms and to request that the international community remove obstacles such as the burden of external debt and make available the tools needed to contribute to universal well-being.

After the First World War, when the roar of the cannons could still be heard, world leaders understood the importance of social justice and created the International Labour Organization, which survived the League of Nations. During the Second World War, thinking that victory was imminent, the leaders of the allied countries, traumatized by the intensity of the conflict, declared in Philadelphia that poverty anywhere constitutes a danger for the prosperity of all. This should not be forgotten. It would be criminal and suicidal to ignore it.

It is naive to think that the free interplay of economic forces, whose importance we admit, would be sufficient to eradicate poverty. This has been recognized by the United Nations. We are more conscious of the fact that the human element is fundamental to its existence. Many of us are willing to fight for the poor, even at the risk of being called "populists". We must fight against both the effects and the causes of poverty. We cannot simply disregard the conviction that justice is the basis of peace. And social justice is an important aspect of justice. On the other hand, experience worldwide points to another potential threat: corruption in all forms and shapes, which results in the denial of justice. Repressing corruption requires not only the decision of every State, but also international solidarity. Yet, repressing it is not enough: we must prevent it. We must rescue ethical values for humanity.

So, let us speak frankly: antagonisms of all sorts, poverty, especially abject poverty, selfishness and corruption, which eat away at our conscience and destroy institutions, all represent the most serious threat to peace. The peoples are eagerly waiting for us to assume our responsibility of facing up to these dangers not in word only but in deed.

Antagonism, injustice, poverty and corruption are the greatest enemies that we must fight in the new half-century that is now dawning for the United Nations. It is time to stand up to those enemies, to turn our good intentions into reality. Let us then work to fulfil our duty, target our action and make it effective.

6. The Republic of Madagascar

Address by
H.E. Professor Albert Zafy, President

[Delivered in French]

I am gratified to have this opportunity to attend this assembly of nations and I join with everyone here in celebrating this great event, the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. Fifty years! We are no longer young, but neither are we old yet. This is maturity, an age replete with usefulness and reason, the result of a wealth of experience garnered over half a century.

The rapid recovery of the nations ruined by six years of war, the end of the cold war and the spectacular collapse of the Berlin Wall are some of the events that fuelled people's hopes for a better world, a world from which war, poverty, destitution and all forms of exploitation would be banished for ever and where respect for rights, real and not simply theoretical equality between nations, small and large, would prevail.

But, we are bound to acknowledge that it is still a great step from precept to practice, from slogan to deed.

Thus, in our humble opinion, this anniversary provides us with an opportunity to take stock of the last half-century and to examine together ways and means to influence the course of the coming years to ensure that this Organization can genuinely live up to the expectations of all the peoples of the world that yearn for peace, equality, respect for human life, and peaceful technological progress.

This special meeting of nations should not be merely a symbolic and ritual commemoration — it should provide an opportunity to take stock and reflect on a new strategy for security, development and the future of democracy inside and outside our Organization.

For its part, Madagascar fully supports reform of the United Nations that is consistent with its true vocation. We should give the General Assembly, the most representative body of Members opinions, adequate powers, expand the Security Council on the basis of geographical distribution so that it may truly become a body for implementing General Assembly resolutions and reflect equality, and hence, democracy. Exercise of the right of veto is anti-democratic and therefore anachronistic.

Poverty, drugs, the debt burden, the increase of fundamentalism, xenophobia, regional conflicts and unemployment are the evils dogging this century, the fruits of social injustice and economic imbalance.

There was a time when we feared the "yellow peril". Now, our fears are focused on the "black peril" or the "coffee-coloured peril" with regard to immigrants in Europe. In the short term, this anxiety could help the third world. The risk of destabilization as a result of immigration has heightened the awareness of many people in favour of increased development assistance for the third world to stem this exodus to rich countries.

Many voices, including in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have been heard sounding an alarm to alert decision-makers to tackle the root of the problem by investing more, for example, in the social sphere. But, there is a school of thought that opposes the 20/20 initiative that has been adopted by the United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Population Fund, the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and UNESCO to free up sufficient resources and which advocates budget reductions arguing that the needed financial resources are not available.

It is deplorable to note that special or national interests sometimes prevail over the sense of solidarity that increasing interdependence requires.

As a result of the global context we must provide the United Nations with the resources it needs to be able to carry out its essential tasks, which are to ensure peace, promote development and serve democracy.

The third world faces many constraints. The application of the widely advocated concept of good governance with less emphasis on traditional donor assistance is not impartial: it is very flexible and indulgent when it comes to countries with strategic raw materials, but strict and restrictive when it comes to others.

Docility or passivity is often highly regarded; expressing criticism puts you in the category of naughty student. The perverse effects of economic embargoes harm the innocent civilian population more than those they are intended to punish. By contrast, a firm approach should be the rule in the case of arms embargoes.

On the threshold of the twenty-first century, the United Nations finds itself at a new crossroads. It is clear that changes must be introduced in our Organization, which was conceived 50 years ago in a totally different political and economic context.

Our determination to work to that end will be the best response both to the anxieties of the developing world, which has doubts about the solidity of the North's commitment to contribute to solving the problem of development, and to the demands of public opinion in the developed countries, which is concerned to see development assistance put to proper use. Consensus on the steps to be taken would restore confidence in the future of the United Nations.

Allow me to express my great pleasure at seeing all of you here at this session of the General Assembly to which the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, has so kindly invited us. I pay tribute to his competence, his devotion and his keen sense of responsibility. I thank him for the remarkably successful organization of this Special Meeting.

I am also pleased to congratulate the City of New York and its Mayor, Mr. Giuliani, and his team for the success of our stay in the "Big Apple" of New York.

I should also like to pay tribute to the President of the United States of America for his benevolent support for the convening of this commemoration of the United Nations fiftieth anniversary.

7. Mongolia

Address by
H.E. Mr. Punsalmaagiin Ochirbat, President

[Delivered in Mongolian; English text provided by the delegation]

The United Nations, having risen from the ashes of the most devastating war in the history of humankind, is today celebrating its golden anniversary with a renewed sense of purpose and confidence in the future.

From a distance of 50 years one could reasonably argue that there were no victors or vanquished in that war and that the sole winner was the entire human race. But the 50 million who perished in it will always be a stark reminder of the imperative still fundamental today, namely, perseverance in our collective efforts to achieve peace, progress and social justice. I say this in the name of a country that stood by the Allied forces and did all it could to facilitate the victory over fascism and militarism.

The second half of this century will go down in the annals of history as a time of great victories of human genius, of the triumphant struggles of peoples for freedom, independence and democracy, of a dawning realization of the humanistic ideals of equity, justice and human rights. In all these truly revolutionizing processes the part played by the United Nations has indeed been instrumental.

This half century will also be remembered as a time of tremendous waste of human creativity and energy for purposes of destruction, a time of rising disparities between nations, of flagrant abuse of nature and its finite resources and, above all, of unprecedented loss of human lives and human deprivation despite the infinite possibilities opened up by revolutions in science and technology. This turbulent world of glaring contrasts, having moved beyond the cold war, has now entered a new stage of rapid changes in its development.

Challenging as it may be, history is offering us a unique opportunity for a genuine realization of the lofty objectives and ideals conceived by the founders of the United Nations. This calls insistently for a bold reform of the Organization. It goes without saying that the underlying purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter should constitute the foundation of any and all change. The reform process should embrace the entire United Nations system. Democratization, transparency, accountability, and due consideration of the positions of all should be at the heart of reform. Reform especially concerns the Security Council. In our view, this soul-searching undertaking should lead us to an Organization that is more sensitive to and protective of the needs and interests of the smaller and weaker majority.

The United Nations is all too often criticized and blamed for every ill and wrong. But it is all too often forgotten that the effectiveness of our Organization directly depends on the political will of its Member States. The United Nations is not only a rostrum for us to express our thoughts but, as a centre for harmonizing our actions and positions, it should also provide the model criteria for constructive negotiations.

In our view, it is imperative to make the mechanism for the pacific settlement of disputes work. This could include, *inter alia*, the further development and implementation of ground rules that would help ensure that negotiations are conducted solely and exclusively on the basis of good will and respect for the sovereign and equal rights of all participants, unimpeded by any actions designed to disrupt them, poison their atmosphere or attain unilateral concessions through pressure. We believe that this is an important issue that deserves due consideration by the General Assembly.

In conclusion, may I reaffirm Mongolia's determination to join with other sister nations in our common endeavour to bequeath to succeeding generations a world that is peaceful, prosperous, pluralist and humane.

8. The People's Republic of China

Address by
H.E. Mr. Jiang Zemin, President

[Delivered in Chinese]

In a few years' time mankind will bid farewell to the twentieth century with all its vicissitudes, and enter the twenty-first century, with all its promise. At this historic juncture it is of great significance that we have gathered here from all corners of the world to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

The founding of the United Nations 50 years ago was a major event in the history of international relations. It reflected the strong desire of the people of the world to eliminate the scourge of war and mirrored humanity's dream for a new world of peace, equality, cooperation and prosperity.

Over the past 50 years our world has undergone earth-shaking changes. The struggle for national liberation and social progress has raged like a prairie fire. Mankind has maintained peace for half a century. However, all is not tranquil in the world today. The international situation after the end of the cold war has, on the whole, moved towards relaxation, yet hegemonism and power politics have lingered, armed conflicts and local wars have kept cropping up one after another, and hundreds of millions of people in the developing world are still struggling with poverty.

Over the past 50 years the United Nations has done much useful work in mitigating regional conflicts, eradicating colonialism, expediting arms reduction and promoting peace and development in the world. However, it also has its failures and setbacks. Certain big Powers have tended to use the Organization as a signboard under which to advance their own political interests, and their rivalry has often left the United Nations in limbo. Moreover, the rights and interests of the large number of developing countries have not been fully respected for a long time.

Our experience and lessons over the past half century, the purposes and principles of the Charter and the epochal themes of peace and development have all placed solemn and urgent demands on us.

We must create a secure and reliable international environment of lasting peace and stability. Disputes between States should be resolved through peaceful negotiations and consultations instead of resorting to the use or threat of force. Efforts should be made to stem and remove various factors that might lead to war, with a view to safeguarding the security of all countries and regions in the world.

We must uphold the norms governing international relations, with the principles of sovereign equality and non-interference in each other's internal affairs as the core. These principles established by the founders of the United Nations in the Charter 50 years ago have greater vitality and are of realistic significance today. All sovereign States are equal members of the international community. It is time that we wrote a new chapter in the annals of international relations in which the phenomena of the big bullying the small, the strong lording it over the weak and the rich oppressing the poor are removed completely from the face of the Earth.

We must establish a new type of international economic relations featuring mutual benefit, mutual complementarity and common development. The internationalization of economic life requires that all countries conduct extensive economic exchanges and cooperation. The developed countries should help the developing countries to revitalize their economies, which also serves the long-term interests of the developed countries.

We should bring about a situation of international harmony which allows countries to make independent choices and seek common ground while putting aside differences. It is within the sovereignty of every nation to opt, in keeping with its own reality and the will of its people, for a social system and road of development of its own choice. No one else has the right to interfere with it. It is only by respecting one another seeking common ground while putting aside differences, living with one another in amity and complementing one another that we can make the world as colourful as a garden where a hundred flowers compete for the beauty prize.

We must join hands in meeting the challenges to human survival and development. We all share one and the same planet. The solution to such global issues as ecological degradation and population explosion requires not only efforts at the national level but also close coordination and cooperation at the international level.

It is our view that the foregoing points should be incorporated in the new international political and economic order whose establishment has been eagerly desired by the people of all countries. The United Nations should and can play its important and unique role in this regard. It can be said that the realization of such a new international political and economic order is the main hallmark of the better world we are to build together.

Loving peace and desiring development, the Chinese people are willing to cultivate friendly relations and cooperation with the people of the rest of the world and steadfastly pursue an independent foreign policy of peace. Even when China becomes stronger and developed it will not seek hegemony or pose a threat to anyone. On the contrary, China, as an important force for the maintenance of world peace and stability will make an even greater contribution to mankind.

There is only one China in the world and Taiwan is an inalienable part of Chinese territory. The Government of the People's Republic of China is China's sole legal Government and its sole representative in the United Nations. The Chinese people have the ability, the resourcefulness and the confidence to overcome any interference in putting an end to the division between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits and achieve the reunification of the motherland.

Being a founding Member of the United Nations and one of the permanent members of the Security Council, China has always abided by the purposes and principles of the Charter and conscientiously fulfilled its international responsibilities and obligations. We believe that the United Nations should adopt necessary and appropriate reforms in the spirit of fairness, reasonableness and full consultation.

The political leaders of our generation have on their shoulders the historic mission of carrying forward the cause of world peace, development and progress into the future. In looking forward to the new century, let us join hands and work together for a still better world.

9. The Principality of Monaco

Address by
His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III, Head of State

[Delivered in French]

The Principality of Monaco, which takes a modest seat among the concert of nations, is honoured to be able to join in this solemn tribute paid by the General Assembly in devoting this Special Meeting to commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

The terrible images of the Second World War, of horrible combats, of massive destruction, of endless suffering inflicted on innocent civilians and on combatants, remind us of the kind of events and dangers that brought the representatives of 51 allied countries to San Francisco to sign, on 26 June 1945, the Charter that established the United Nations.

While the balance of military force and diplomacy has since that memorable date spared mankind a further world conflagration, many countries have suffered from armed conflict. We still see too often the tragic picture of civilians fleeing the fighting and taking the road of exodus to uncertain destinations; we see families, women and old people completely abandoned.

In all circumstances, the United Nations has done its utmost, with the authority and means available to it, to help promote a return to peace, to protect the peoples exposed to danger and to ease the suffering of victims.

Experience has shown that the needs which gave rise to the San Francisco Charter are with us today.

Apart from the conflicts that I have just mentioned, in the past 50 years the world has also undergone other upheavals which political leaders have to take into account in their day-to-day activities and in their decisions.

Focusing only on the essentials, I shall speak about the population explosion throughout the world and the serious attacks on nature and the environment by urbanization and industrialization; the major advances by science and technology, which have often benefited man but have sometimes also brought new threats to his life or health; the appearance of scourges, such as drugs and AIDS; and blind terrorism of various kinds and authors.

The United Nations and its specialized agencies are doing their utmost to bring about the exchange of knowledge, and cooperation and agreement, the only way to enable people and nations to move along the road to peace and sustainable prosperity. That is the major challenge facing us at the end of the second millennium.

As a Member of the United Nations the Principality of Monaco has adhered to the purposes and principles enshrined in the San Francisco Charter. For the time being, my country has no other ambition than to live up to the commitments it has entered into under the Charter and to implement the decisions taken on the basis of the Charter.

Monaco is regularly involved financially in the work being undertaken on behalf of children, refugees, victims of torture, and disabled persons — indeed the humanitarian work of the Organization. Our Principality is always willing to participate in initiatives to strengthen the protection of unarmed civilian populations during times of conflict.

The Principality is a seagoing country and is particularly active, and intends to continue being active, in the sphere of protection of the seas and oceans, and, beyond that, nature in general.

Monaco remains faithful to the recommendations adopted at the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit and is striving to implement them. We now know that natural resources are not inexhaustible. Only by using them in moderation can we ensure peace and well-being for future generations.

I cannot end my statement without paying well-deserved tribute to the current and former officials and staff of the United Nations — first among them, of course, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali and his predecessors — for their devotion and self-sacrifice, sometimes at the peril of their lives, in the service of this Organization.

May the experience of the last 50 years encourage us to persevere in our efforts so that the world can take even greater inspiration from the ideals that led the way in the founding of the United Nations.

Peace is not merely the absence of war. It is, above all, a vocation residing within each one of us, and when its seeds are spread, peace can take root and flourish everywhere and for everyone.

10. The Republic of Guyana

Address by
H.E. Dr. Cheddi B. Jagan, President

As the United Nations proudly celebrates its fiftieth anniversary, I wish to join the other Members of our international family in paying tribute to the Organization which has served us so well over these many years.

As so many others before me have testified, the accomplishments of the United Nations during its 50 years of existence have been many and significant. With the ending of the cold war, there is now a promise of even greater achievements.

Yet, although now free from the tensions of East-West rivalry, we are still hostage to many threats to our peace and security. This crucial time is characterized by, first, globalization and liberalization of the world economy, dominated by transnational corporations and one over-powering ideology; second, unacceptably high unemployment and underemployment, even in a period of economic growth, referred to as "jobless growth" and "jobless recovery"; third, increasing poverty and widening gaps, in developed and developing countries, between the haves and the have-nots — the included and the excluded — and between the rich North and the poor South; fourth, chronic budget and balance-of-payments deficit problems for many Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, leading to the dismantling of the welfare State and cuts in welfare benefits in the North, as well as cuts in aid to the South — the phenomenon now termed "donor fatigue" or "aid fatigue"; fifth, social, including family, disintegration; sixth, strife and conflicts based on race, ethnicity, tribe, culture and religion, leading to a marked increase in refugees; and, seventh, demagogy and confusion, leading politically, to the dangerous rise of the extreme right, the religious right, national chauvinists, xenophobists and neofascists and, socially, to racism and racist attacks.

Cumulatively, these factors pose a grave threat to international and individual peace and security. Consequently, there is an urgent necessity for a new global human order as an adjunct to the United Nations Agenda for Development. A new global human order must have as its goal human development, which means meeting the basic needs of the people, attaining cultural uplift and providing a clean and safe environment.

To attain a new global human order, it is necessary to establish a sound and just system of global governance based on a genuine North-South partnership and interdependence for mutual benefit; a democratic culture of representative, consultative and participatory democracy and a lean and clean administration; a development strategy free from external domination and diktat; the application of science and technology for increased production and productivity; a global development facility, funded by pollution taxes, cuts in military expenditure — the peace dividend — a mere 3 per cent reduction of which could realize $460 billion in the five-year period from 1995-2000, and a tax of 0.5 per cent on speculative capital-exchange movements, which could yield $1,500 billion annually; and the administration of a development fund by a democratized and reformed United Nations for allocation without undue conditions to the developed and developing countries alike — with such assistance, more job opportunities could be created by a works programme, as was done under the Roosevelt New Deal Administration during the Depression of the 1930s, and we could have a shorter work week and a lower pensionable age, while for the developing countries, aid could be given in the form of debt cancellation, long-term rescheduling of debt, soft loans and grants.

Third-world debt is strangling our reconstruction and human development efforts. Although we paid more than $1.3 trillion between 1982 and 1990, our countries were 61 per cent deeper in debt in 1990 than they were in 1982. During the same period there was a net South-to-North outflow of $418 billion — not including outflows such as royalties, dividends, repatriated profits, underpaid raw materials and so on — a sum equal to six Marshall Plans, the Plan which provided aid to Europe at the end of the Second World War. At the same time, our third-world countries lose about $500 billion annually in unfair non-equivalent international trade, a sum equal to 10 times the official development assistance from the developed countries.

This unjust economic order must be replaced by a just new global human order for international and individual security and peace. The human development paradigm must be established on a basis of empowerment of our peoples, accountability, productivity and sustainability. Economic growth must be linked to equity, with social justice and ecological preservation.

Let us together resolve, on this historic occasion, to strengthen the United Nations, which was created not only to preserve us from the scourge of war but also to allow our peoples to live in larger freedom. Let us move forward in unity with a new global human order.

11. The Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Address by
H.E. Mr. Alija Izetbegović, President of the Presidency

The United Nations, whose anniversary we celebrate today, has always been a source of our hope, but also a constant cause of our disappointment. Some say that it is the largest, but, on occasions, the most inefficient body in human history. The number of unimplemented resolutions is proof of this. Being as it is, our Organization probably reflects the imperfection of our world. If the continuous improvement of the world is not work in vain, the further improvement of the United Nations is not only possible, but very necessary.

The supreme goal is the maintenance of peace. The United Nations has succeeded in the prevention of global conflict, but it has proved less effective in stopping local ones. The sum of the catastrophic consequences in local wars from the founding of the United Nations until today has reached a tragic balance with the world wars of this century.

The United Nations acted effectively in stopping the Gulf crisis. Unfortunately, this efficacy has not repeated itself in the case of the aggression against my country. The price of hesitation has been enormous. My people have paid this high price.

I would like to repeat the words of the Georgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, who at this rostrum two days ago stated:

> "We must have the courage and the will to call an aggressor an aggressor, and genocide genocide." (*Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 36th meeting, p. 29*)

As the Assembly knows, very often, there has been a lack of either courage or will, or sometimes both.

In several days the talks on peace in Bosnia will commence. We approach this initiative, undertaken by the United States and its President, with the best of faith and with plenty of hope. Our people need and want peace. We did not start this war, and, although we are enduring, we have not dreamed of being victors in war. We have always worked towards peace and we would like to be victors in peace. We want to strengthen a society based on political and ethnic pluralism, respect for human rights and private enterprise. Since, on the other side, everything is opposite to this, we are confident that our ideas will triumph in a peaceful concurrence in the next five to 10 years. Thanks to the superiority of our models of society and State, we shall win, with God's help.

The Bosnian Government and Army will not accept the division and disintegration of our country, no matter in what packaging it may be served. The division of Bosnia will lead to the continuation of war, immediately or later.

Genuine democratic elections in Bosnia are a big chance — if not the only real chance — to remove from the commanding political and military functions the war criminals and nationalist fanatics who caused this war and who will continue to poison the relations between people and nations. In order for this chance for democracy in the Balkans not to be wasted, it is necessary to ensure certain conditions. These conditions are freedom and effective international supervision of elections.

If the peace negotiations are concluded successfully, the reconstruction of the war-stricken areas will follow, in particular in Bosnia. The international community is promising significant support for the reconstruction plan. In this connection, I would make one, maybe unexpected, proposal: put conditions on this assistance. Send a clear message that the party which will not respect freedoms and human rights will not receive assistance. And decide that these conditions should be strictly observed. Do not make mistakes again, in the hope that you can buy or change the criminals and tyrants by new concessions. And take one step further. Isolate the criminals and tyrants. That is the only way.

Those who have led their people to the path of crime must be removed. Without this there is no peace or security, neither in Bosnia, nor in the region.

We want and have the right to integrate Bosnia, which has been destroyed, not through the will of its people, but through the force of weapons. The Bosniak-Croat Federation is an important step in this direction, and all friends of Bosnia should support and assist this project.

In order to achieve peace, and — what is more — to maintain it, it is necessary to establish a balance in weaponry. This balance can be established on a higher or lower level. We give preference to the latter, and we demand the reduction of Serbian heavy weaponry. If the Serbs reject this, the only option is to arm the Bosnian Army, which, so strengthened, will become a factor of peace and stability in the region.

At present, almost all of our cities are within the reach of Serbian artillery. This artillery must be removed or destroyed. We cannot and we will not agree to continue to live under permanent threat.

Finally, in the past two days many speeches have been delivered in this Hall. We have heard nice and lofty words on democracy and freedom and all that comes with them. Freedom and justice have been recalled by some of those who have stridden and continue to stride over the basic rights of people and nations.

One of the ancient holy scriptures says "Judge them according to their deeds". Therefore, let us listen to what they are saying, but let us see what they are doing. As soon as they return home, they will continue their unrepentant course — of course, if we continue to tolerate it.

12. # The Republic of Liberia

Address by
H.E. Mr. Wilton S. Sankawolo, Chairman of the Council of State
of the Liberian National Transitional Government

On the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, I am greatly honoured and most gratified to have an opportunity to address this august body.

Half a century ago men of optimism who envisioned a world of peaceful coexistence among nations founded the United Nations. They saw the necessity of instituting measures for the prevention and the removal of threats to international peace and security. They wanted to encourage friendly relations between States based on the principles of sovereignty, equality and improving the quality of life for all peoples by fostering economic, social and cultural cooperation throughout the world.

This historic development was prompted by the horrifying experience of two world wars — devastation that threatened the annihilation of life on Earth in all its forms. Additionally, the rapidity with which new weapons of mass destruction were being introduced in the theatre of war aroused the urgent need to set up a permanent mechanism to regulate international relations. The founders of the United Nations also saw the need for defining and codifying rules of conduct for the prevention, management and peaceful resolution of disputes between nations.

If the spectre of war prevails in most of the countries that attained independence after the birth of the United Nations, it is due largely to the legacy of colonialism, the cold war and the pains that often characterize the new birth of freedom. Colonial powers disregarded the traditional values and social needs of their subjects. The contest for spheres of influence during the cold war gave rise to autocratic regimes, which were insensitive to the aspirations of their peoples. These new democracies must go through growing pains before acquiring maturity. Thus the signing of the United Nations Charter 50 years ago in San Francisco by 51 States, including my country — Liberia — was a significant milestone in the creation of a global arrangement for securing human liberty, as well as maintaining international peace and progress.

This Charter embodies the aspirations of all mankind. Believing in the principles for which it stands, including that of universality, many countries joined the Organization. Today, its membership stands at 185 States. By providing a forum for a frank exchange of views on international issues, the United Nations draws together nations of diverse ideological orientations to tackle their common problems.

A beacon of hope for mankind, the United Nations vigorously fought colonialism and racial discrimination, strongly advocating the right of all members of society to live a free, secure and fulfilling life. In order to safeguard this right, the United Nations established a number of specialized agencies to combat the perennial enemies of mankind: ignorance, disease and poverty. We can say with pride and satisfaction that the United Nations has won for itself enviable records of success in these endeavours. Most colonized nations have received their independence; the obnoxious system of apartheid has crumbled; the quality of life has vastly improved in many countries.

However, the United Nations cannot afford to rest on its laurels, for its successes are overshadowed by conflicts in many parts of the world. A steadily widening prosperity gap and inequities strain relations between the developed and the developing countries. We hope that the nations of the world, especially those enjoying economic affluence, will take positive steps in the near future to establish a new economic order that will improve the quality of life for all peoples. To do less would be an act of non-compliance with the Charter's mandate to forge international machinery to promote the economic and social advancement of all nations.

As peace and development are inextricably linked, Liberia welcomes the two expositions of the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, entitled "An Agenda for Peace" and "An Agenda for Development". Both documents provide a framework in which we can implement the principles contained in the United Nations Charter as it relates to the new realities of the post-cold-war era.

Liberia lends its voice to the call for restructuring of the United Nations. This vital institution must continue evolving and growing in an enlightened fashion, but always within the limits of the principles enshrined in its Charter.

I want to utilize this forum to inform the Assembly that, after almost six years of bitter civil war, Liberians are more hopeful than ever before that peace is finally at hand. This achievement is due largely to the intervention of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which is currently under the dynamic leadership of President Jerry John Rawlings of Ghana. Liberians will for ever remain grateful to our West African brothers for providing and maintaining a peace-keeping force in their country for the security of the people. This, indeed, is an example of genuine African solidarity.

We also extend our deepest appreciation to the United Nations, its specialized agencies, the United States and the international community for the assistance they have rendered throughout our conflict. Now that we have come to a crucial point in our search for peace, we appeal to States Members of the United Nations to render us the assistance needed to bring this conflict to an end by providing the requisite support for the disarmament and demobilization of fighters and the repatriation of our people who are currently languishing in refugee camps abroad. We are assured of peace because the present Council of State comprises all factional leaders, who have turned territories under their control over to the Cease-fire Monitoring Group of ECOWAS (ECOMOG) for the immediate disarmament of all their fighters.

As the Liberian Government and people begin fulfilling the sacred mandate of returning the country to democratic rule, we shall need the continuous support of the international community, not only for the disarmament and demobilization of fighters but also for the social and economic reconstruction of the nation. We are appealing for this support so that Liberia — a founding Member of the United Nations — may regain its standing in the comity of nations. It is our fervent hope that all States Members of the United Nations will make substantial contributions to the Pledging Conference on Liberia to be conducted by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, President Rawlings of Ghana and myself this Friday for the generation of funds to implement programmes that will put Liberia back on its feet.

As we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, it is worth noting that, despite its setbacks and shortcomings, this Organization remains the world's principal mechanism for maintaining international peace and security and for mobilizing collective efforts to deal with global problems.

As we approach the twenty-first century, we must build a new global order that can fulfil the yearnings of the human family for peace, social justice and progress. Liberia reaffirms its abiding faith in and its commitment to the principles of the United Nations.

May God save this all-important Organization as it endeavours to bring peace and prosperity to mankind.

13. The Republic of Palau

Address by
H.E. Mr. Kuniwo Nakamura, President

It is a great honour and pleasure to address this historic gathering and to have the unique privilege of hearing the profound reflections of the world's leaders on the institution of the United Nations and the status of our world.

We are in a period of unprecedented change and opportunity. I refer not only to the remarkable geopolitical events of this decade but also to the accelerating scientific developments changing our world every day. Technical advances, particularly in the fields of telecommunications, computers and material sciences, seem almost miraculous and offer an improved quality of life never before thought possible. They tie our countries, large and small, together and make us dependent on each other as never before in the history of our planet. Money and ideas move instantly across borders. We have the ability to properly feed, educate and provide health care to every human on the planet.

On the other hand, we may be letting these great opportunities slip away. We in Palau are alarmed at the continued degradation of our environment. Every day brings further news of the extinction of species, the irrevocable loss of whole ecosystems, the irrefutable evidence of global warming and a host of additional environmental problems. The continued testing of nuclear weapons not only suggests the spectre of world-wide destruction but also poses potential environmental problems, particularly when such experiments use the Pacific Ocean as their testing area.

Many of the problems we now face can be traced to limited perspective. We may be able to think of, and be concerned for, our children or grandchildren, but who can really care for, or even imagine, our descendants hundreds of years in the future? Large-scale conflicts between nations are often a product of a perspective which focuses on the small differences between groups, and not the enormous similarities between all people.

The United Nations represents the most ambitious and noble attempt humankind has ever made to craft a lens with which to transcend self-interest as individuals and as nations. With such a lens we are able to consider issues from the vantage point of the representatives of our close-knit global family who will come here to the United Nations 50 and 100 years from now to celebrate future anniversaries of this magnificent institution.

The United Nations was born out of a global consciousness shocked by the horrors of the Second World War and it is appropriate that much of its energies are focused on the prevention of war. However, we must recognize that warfare is often a function of economic disparity. An effective tool for the prevention of war is therefore the creation of economic strength within nations and the promotion of economic interdependency between nations. To help prevent conflict, the nations of the world must work through the United Nations, the World Bank and other appropriate bodies to ensure the enhancement of economic cooperation between its Members.

As the newest Member of the United Nations, we also strongly support the desires and aspirations of indigenous people who are still struggling for their basic rights. We believe that the United Nations must continue fully to support self-determination and to give hope to people who desire freedom and control of their own destiny.

Our planet has been compared to a spaceship flying through the universe. As the President of a maritime nation, I prefer to think of it as a sailing vessel. When my ancestors sailed from South-East Asia to Palau, they needed courage, knowledge and wisdom. As nations, we too will need all of these qualities in the coming years. But most of all, my forebears needed to cooperate for the common good in order to survive. The United Nations is at the helm of our planetary ship and we are the captains, navigators and crew. We must all learn to sail together if our voyage is to be a successful one. May peace, harmony and good will ultimately prevail on our planet.

14. The Rwandese Republic

Address by
H.E. Mr. Pasteur Bizimungu, President

As we are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we pay homage to the founding fathers of this Organization, whose vision has charted the way for humanity. The Organization was founded in the aftermath of two devastating world wars.

The purpose was to save mankind from similar calamities arising from social injustices by providing moral tenets for peoples and nations. Indeed, the United Nations formulated and developed significant basic principles relating to human and fundamental rights, the equality of nations and peoples, and the promotion of social and economic progress for all humanity. A lot has been achieved. However, the proclamation of those noble objectives on the one hand and their implementation on the other have, on many occasions, reflected double standards.

While the Charter stipulated the self-determination and sovereignty of nations, colonized people have often had to resort to armed struggle to restore their freedom. Even after flag-independence, new nations remain burdened by the influence of the dominant Powers. If ours were not a sham independence, former colonies would no longer be considered areas of influence where the strategy of "divide and rule" is still applied and the traditional relationship is still that of dominator and dominated.

Last year's horrendous genocide in Rwanda, which cost over a million lives, was the direct consequence of the factors that I have mentioned. Before the advent of colonialism, Rwanda was already a coherent nation. Our ancestors successfully strived to build a nation and a people called Banyarwanda from many kingdoms and peoples.

For centuries, Rwanda existed without divisions on the basis of ethnic or any other sectarian tendencies. Colonialism introduced racist theories and ideologies and practised discrimination. The first ethnic massacre engineered by the authorities in the history of Rwanda occurred in 1959. Rwanda was still under colonial rule. It is important to recall that, from the end of the First World War until 1962, Rwanda was administered under the trusteeship of the League of Nations and subsequently of the United Nations. Since that time, Rwanda has had nationals living in exile as refugees. The plight of those refugees, who numbered about 2 million before last year's genocide, received no attention for over three decades. The existence of those refugees is vivid testimony of the discriminatory policy that was pursued inside the country. In actual fact, the present Government is the first in the history of modern Rwanda that does not prevent its nationals in exile to return home.

Were it not for outside interference intended to divide our compatriots, the Rwandese people, based on moral principles and legal instruments set by the United Nations, would easily find solutions to the consequences of genocide and a path towards national reconciliation. But now, the planners and perpetrators of genocide are welcomed in some capitals, not only as ordinary, innocent refugees, but as heroes deserving to lead people. Those same criminals, encouraged by complacency, plan to carry on genocide and are being re-armed while at the same time they forbid refugees to return home.

Not only is this a violation of international conventions; it also reflects moral decay. How can the world be peaceful when there is no respect for basic principles and when there is no morality? It is in this context that President Daniel arap Moi of Kenya pretends to serve a good cause by associating with those criminals and protecting them.

In economic matters, relations between rich and poor countries are also characterized by the domination of the weak by the strong. One example is that, when negotiating with financial partners, underdeveloped countries have no choice but to accept projects the way those international financial institutions want them. But when they fail, the consequences are not shared — all of them are shifted to the poor nations. This is the origin of the debt burden, which has negative effects on development.

Mechanisms should be worked out so that the United Nations can deliver on expectations. In particular, there is a need to reform the Security Council to make it more representative and to strengthen the role of the General Assembly.

The future of our Organization, our future, requires us to strive for unconditional solidarity and more dynamic cooperation. Mankind should never again witness the horrors of genocide that took place in Rwanda and the current "ethnic cleansing" in the former Yugoslavia must be brought to an end. We count on the United Nations to direct and support our efforts to create a better world for humanity.

15. The Republic of Bulgaria

Address by
H.E. Dr. Zhelyu Zhelev, President

I would like to thank Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for his warm welcome and the opportunity to address this most representative international forum on behalf of the Republic of Bulgaria, whose people celebrate, together with the whole world, the fiftieth birthday of the United Nations.

Its birth was both a promising beginning and a triumphant end to a terrible war. In the gigantic clash between democracy and totalitarianism during the Second World War, the democratic forces in Bulgaria preserved their nation's dignity. Despite the difficult historic circumstances, Bulgaria allowed no Bulgarian Jew to be sent to the death camps and no Bulgarian soldier to fight against the anti-Nazi coalition. What is more, it fought against the Nazis in the winter and spring of 1945. Regrettably, Bulgaria could only join the United Nations 10 years later, when it had already been entrapped in the Warsaw Treaty Organization at the cost of its independent policy.

Without the principles laid down in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1989 "velvet" revolutions in Eastern Europe would hardly have been able to sweep away the totalitarian regimes equipped, as they were, with the powerful tools of demagogy, propaganda and terror. The two documents proclaimed, once and for all, the universal validity of fundamental human rights. They held out the promise of social progress and a higher standard of living through individual freedom and free enterprise.

Modern Bulgaria is gradually resuming its traditional place in the European family, developing the full range of relations with the countries and bodies of the European Union, of which it is an associate member. It is an active partner of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), working with it for the cause of peace and international security. Briefly, Bulgaria is steering a steady course to the West while building bridges to the East and the South.

In the last 50 years, the south-eastern part of Europe reproduced on a smaller scale the pattern of international relations and even the world contradictions; hence the high stake in the present effort to resolve the raging and smouldering conflicts in former Yugoslavia.

Bulgaria has been giving its unwavering support to the international effort to restore peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to build regional security. It has been doing so at a high economic and moral cost. We know from experience that the democratic option is the key to the reconciliation of interests and the rights of various ethnic and religious groups in a rule of law. We are, therefore, prepared to participate in building up the democratic institutions and in the material recovery of the embattled areas in the post-war period.

A long-term strategy for a lasting settlement of conflicts in south-eastern Europe should be founded in a modern communications and transport infrastructure linking the Balkan countries with the rest of Europe, north-south and west-east. There is an urgent need for specific programmes in support of stable regional development. The day before yesterday, together with the Presidents of other States in the region, we made one more effort to pool our resources, with the help of some international organizations, to breathe life into the initiatives for the development of south-eastern Europe.

Our historical experience has taught us that unity is strength. I would like to assure the Assembly that Bulgaria will continue to be a worthy Member of the United Nations.

16. The Dominican Republic

Address by
H.E. Mr. Jacinto Peynado Garrigosa, Constitutional
Vice President

[Delivered in Spanish]

At this Special Meeting at which we commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, we must recognize and congratulate ourselves on, what the United Nations has meant to humanity since 1945. Its achievements at the international level, particularly those relating to the maintenance of peace, have been one of the most precious assets of mankind throughout this past half century.

We must also recognize that the ongoing efforts by the United Nations to promote human rights and to eliminate injustice have been of overriding importance.

This Organization has been able to settle armed conflicts and avoid armed conflicts, has fostered democratic institutions by promoting free and fair elections, and has raised its voice in defence of the poor, bringing humanitarian assistance to tens of millions of people throughout the world.

Its leadership in efforts to protect the environment is moving towards the achievement of consensus on reversing environmental degradation throughout the world and in achieving a sustainable way of life as we approach the twenty-first century.

We must also mention the enormous efforts made by the United Nations to eliminate infectious disease and to carry out the worldwide child-immunization campaign, and in the adoption of the Conventions on the Rights of the Child and on the protection of women.

But in this new millennium, which is only five years away now, our Organization must also face up to the great challenges of a permanently changing world, in which areas of confrontation, discrimination and extreme poverty remain.

In the new world situation, peace implies economic and social well-being, environmental viability and the protection of human rights: to think of peace without these is virtually impossible. The times require that Governments now become involved in thorough change in their economic and social structures so as to establish the basis for sustainable human progress. Economic measures alone, without a reordering of society that would enhance the dignity, freedom and self-development of human beings, can never help in strengthening democracy.

The alleviation of poverty must be based on policies that include integration of the poorer sectors, so that they can enjoy the benefits of life in society. Let us then adopt the right solutions now to eliminate the causes of poverty, which have such a significant effect on the social fabric of our peoples. Let all our nations — rich and poor, large or small — seek together a way of achieving a better standard of living through sustainable economic and social development.

It is time to choose those instruments that will enable us to put into practice our ideas, which have already taken the form of conventions, declarations and resolutions by this Organization and its specialized agencies. Let us ensure that everybody benefits from the general well-being.

The great majority of Heads of State who have spoken before me have agreed that when the cold war ended, new priorities emerged for all the nations of the world. If we add to this reality the fact that the globalization process often requires additional sacrifices, we must conclude that the pressures on nations, particularly the smaller ones, will increase in the not far distant future. At that time, the United Nations will have to play an active and decisive role so as to maintain the social, economic and political balance among the nations that make it up, with the understanding that all have the same rights and obligations now that we are enjoying a relative peace and that titanic efforts are under way to resolve the conflicts that persist.

Our Government, headed by His Excellency Joaquín Balaguer, and the people that I represent join in celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, and share the hope that the Organization's efforts and successes will continue to increase in the continuing search for a just, united, common and fraternal humanity, sharing the material and spiritual assets of a civilization that can lead us to see people as part of a common humanity.

We would urge all Member States to respect the mandates and the initiatives of this Organization, for only through a true awareness of all the problems facing our countries and their possible solutions will we be able to promote the well-being of the individual.

17. The Kingdom of Belgium

Address by
H.E. Mr. Jean-Luc Dehaene, Prime Minister

[*Delivered in French*]

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, which we are commemorating today, marks the beginning of a new era for our Organization. The longstanding divisions of the cold war have given way to a heightened awareness of our growing interdependence. The processes of integration and of regional and international cooperation, the development of trade and economic globalization are all positive phenomena. However, the international community remains vulnerable to imbalances, crises and conflicts that affect its various components. Self-interest as much as generosity therefore oblige the international community to show solidarity.

The best instrument for implementing that solidarity is still the United Nations. This fiftieth anniversary should therefore be an opportunity for us to adapt the United Nations to new realities and to equip it to face the challenges of the next century.

It is above all in the social and economic fields that I see a priority role for the United Nations. The globalization of socio-economic activities calls for an integrated and universal approach, for if the development of the world economy is not accompanied by regulations and corrective mechanisms, it runs the risk of increasing destabilization and of breeding social and ecological imbalances.

Our Organization is the ideal forum in which to address these major questions efficiently by stimulating interaction among the various institutions and organs of the United Nations, which continue to play an important role in their respective fields.

I welcome the growing importance that the United Nations attaches to these global challenges. In recent years, major conferences on the environment and development, human rights, population, social development and, very recently, on women have strengthened our conviction that only a common, united commitment can enable us to tackle the major obstacles to development successfully.

Let us not lose the momentum generated by these major conferences, and let us give real effect to the objectives that they have set, using the United Nations to channel the political energy thus created and step by step to create a more just new world order. In that fairer new world order, our Organization should give particular importance to a concerted campaign to combat terrorism, the scourge of drugs, cross-border criminal activity and arms trafficking.

The United Nations should serve also as the world's conscience. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has served as the basis and a source of inspiration for the whole normative undertaking of the last 50 years in the area of the protection and dissemination of human rights.

In a wider context, the establishment of an international criminal court would, in our opinion, mark a new and important phase, and I hope that this objective will soon be achieved. Respect for human rights, combined with democratic social organization, creates conditions favourable for development. Without economic and social development, peace will always be fragile.

The United Nations performs a function of primary importance in the maintenance of international peace and security, whether acting alone or with regional organizations. The credibility of the United Nations peace operations can be ensured only if certain conditions are met.

The United Nations should urgently increase its capacity for and speed of intervention. One method of doing this would be to improve the existing system of stand-by forces.

The best contribution of the international community to peace and security is still, above all, avoiding the outbreak of conflicts by means of preventive diplomacy. There needs to be cooperation to this end among the United Nations, the Member States, regional organizations and specialized agencies.

Certainly the United Nations requires reform if it is to become more efficient and more effective. But we must remain pragmatic and first give it a solid financial base. As a reflection of its Member States, the United Nations can do nothing unless we confirm our political commitment and comply with our financial obligations. Any unilateral stance would only aggravate the United Nations crisis.

The United Nations, as the driving force of international dialogue and mutual understanding, deserves our respect and our support. It is still the best guide to economic and social development, the best instrument for the protection and promotion of human rights, and an assurance against military adventurism. Drawing on our half-century of experience, let us seize this opportunity to create a world in which future generations may find fulfilment in peace and dignity.

18. The Kingdom of Thailand

Address by
H.E. Mr. Banharn Silpa-Archa, Prime Minister

[*Delivered in Thai; English text provided by the delegation*]

Fifty years ago, a tree was planted to shelter mankind from war and want. This tree, the United Nations, was an expression of faith and hope that, through international cooperation, peace would prevail and people everywhere would enjoy the fruits of progress. The dramatic end of the cold war created a widespread expectation that peace and prosperity were finally within reach. But peace has yet to prevail throughout the world.

To the people of Thailand, peace is not merely an absence of hostilities. Peace must be a positive state of well-being. It must be peace with freedom and justice, leading to prosperity. We call it *santisukh*, which means "happiness in tranquillity". To achieve this ideal peace, Thai culture places particular emphasis on tolerance and compromise. These virtues have stood the test of time. Thai rulers throughout history have recognized the importance of these virtues in fostering social harmony and progress. As a result, tolerance and compromise are deeply ingrained in the Thai character, forming the cement which bonds our society together. It is therefore only natural that these Thai core values should find resonance in the United Nations Charter, which seeks

> "to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom".

Over the past few decades, this affinity between Thai values and United Nations goals has been reflected in South-East Asia. In Cambodia, both Thailand and the United Nations played key roles in ending the conflict and, in effect, in bringing peace to the region. Today, that formerly war-torn country is on the road to democracy, while its citizens are enjoying new-found security and freedom.

Peace is but one crucial facet of *santisukh*. The other involves the creation of a better life for the people. In this regard, the record of the United Nations speaks for itself. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has worked quietly but effectively to improve the lives of millions of Asians. Thanks in no small part to ESCAP, poverty and disease in the region are receding, and more people are taking charge of their own destiny.

In this day and age, where uncertainty lurks at every turn, and where sustainable development poses a challenge, the United Nations is more important than ever. Its role in South-East Asia has shown that, with the right kind of support, it is indeed capable of promoting "happiness in tranquillity". We should see to it that the Organization concentrates on the things which only it can do, or which it can do better than any other international body: to stop people from killing each other, to get people to treat each other fairly, and to help people live in an environment of their own choosing. These are the most valuable contributions that the United Nations can make to mankind.

On behalf of the people and the Government of Thailand, I hereby reaffirm our faith in the principle's and purposes of the United Nations Charter and pledge our full support for the Organization in its efforts to promote lasting peace and global prosperity.

19. The Commonwealth of Dominica

Address by
H.E. The Honourable Edison C. James, Prime Minister
and Minister for External Affairs, Legal Affairs and Labour

On behalf of the Government and the people of the Commonwealth of Dominica, I extend sincere congratulations to this body on its fiftieth anniversary. May I also say that it is a privilege and an honour for our country to participate in this special celebration. I say "special" because Achievement Fifty in any endeavour attracts particular attention. For us in the cricketing world, the number 50 signifies a milestone in the cricketer's record, always met with warm applause; as individuals we mark our fiftieth birthday in special ways. However, such occasions provide the opportunity also for reflection, for self-examination and for self-criticism: for looking ahead.

Looking back, one can say that the past 50 years have not been the easiest or the most peaceful in the history of mankind. Fifty years ago, the world was slowly emerging from the batterings and atrocities associated with two global conflicts, particularly with the Second World War, that most horrifying experience in the history of mankind. There was, understandably, scepticism about the capacity of any one institution to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. But hope springs eternal in the human breast, and born out of the rubble was an ideal, embodied in the United Nations system, that war could give way to peace, that the use of measured words could replace the use of force in settling disputes. The task has not been easy.

Today we celebrate the fact that 50 years ago a group of dedicated men and women, undaunted by what they had witnessed, came together to forge an organization totally dedicated to peace among men. Today we salute those nations which, through the United Nations, continue to struggle towards that peace.

Among the areas of achievement during these past 50 years can be cited the dismantling of colonialism and the birth of the great majority of nations represented here today in this Assembly. We have seen friendly relations develop among nations, based on respect for the principle of equal rights and the self-determination of peoples. We have seen international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural and humanitarian character. We have seen encouragement for the achievement of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion. In all these endeavours, the United Nations has played a major part and has been a significant contributor to world peace. Indeed, today we can all celebrate.

The successes to which we allude could not have been achieved without the strong support offered the United Nations by its partners in the perennial search for peace: those regional and interregional bodies which serve as the monitors and implementers of United Nations policies. As current chairman of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), I am proud to state on behalf of my colleagues, Heads of Government of CARICOM, that our organization has been one of those partners. A most recent example of our commitment to world peace is our mission of hope to the Haitian people, a well loved part of our Caribbean family.

The United Nations has enjoyed other successes to which all can justly claim to have made some contribution. In this hemisphere, there is the solving of problems in El Salvador. Across the Atlantic there is the question of the independence of South-West Africa, now Namibia, and there is the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa.

While the solving of political problems is important, we view the present role of the United Nations as one of active involvement in the search for an enhanced quality of life for the inhabitants of this earth, thus linking peace and security with economic and social development. In this regard, the role played by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNICEF, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and other specialized agencies of the United Nations deserve applause. Efforts at improving the situation of under-privileged persons should also receive universal applause. The Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing Conferences have helped to advance gender equality and give recognition to the role of women in the agenda for development.

As we look to the future with hope, we cannot help but reflect with concern on the fact that one of the founding Members of the United Nations has now been relegated to the status of a non-Member. I refer here to the Republic of China. The Commonwealth of Dominica believes that a way can and must be found for the 21 million people of that territory to have a voice in the affairs of the United Nations.

As we enter the second half-century of the United Nations, there is talk of modernization, revitalization and restructuring, concepts every organization must not only keep in mind, but must for its own survival actively seek to apply to its *modus operandi*. The United Nations system was designed to deal with the problems of the post-war period, problems mainly related to the disruption of international peace through recourse to arms. Today's threat to peace has to do primarily with development. We would like to believe, therefore, that the cost-cutting measures and streamlining proposed for this restructuring will take into account the legitimate aspirations of those who people small and vulnerable States such as the Commonwealth of Dominica.

We also ask that in the name of justice for all, powerful and prosperous countries refrain from trade and economic measures which will have as a result the lowering of the standard of life of these small and vulnerable States. Let us always remember that every human being has a right to be clothed with dignity, and that at the very heart of the cosmos stands that same human being, that irreducible kernel of development.

The world looks to us for leadership, and much more. The Commonwealth of Dominica pledges its support to, and will seek to collaborate with all United Nations efforts to provide this leadership to the world. Guidance, fairness, justice, peace and security are for many still distant ideals. Let us reaffirm our belief in the principles enshrined in our Charter. Let us rededicate ourselves to bequeathing a healthy planet, a peaceful world to succeeding generations. We cannot and shall not let them down.

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Address by
H.E. Mrs. Benazir Bhutto, Prime Minister

Fifty years ago this day, men and women of vision assembled to create an Organization to save the world from war.

The principles of equal rights and self-determination lay at the heart of that Charter. Millions in Asia, Africa and Latin America owe their freedom to the pursuit by this Organization of these noble ideals. We celebrate this achievement. For 50 years there has been no global conflict. We celebrate this great achievement.

We applaud the United Nations humanitarian and peace-keeping interventions, to which the brave sons of Pakistan have contributed with their own blood.

We welcome the United Nations efforts to emphasize social issues, including population, social development, women and human settlements.

The threat of global conflict has receded, but the images of suffering in Kashmir, in Bosnia and other regions have saddened us all. And although foreign occupation of Afghanistan has ended, Pakistan has been left to carry the burden of one and a half million refugees. The United Nations needs to share this burden and strengthen its efforts for peace in Afghanistan.

So, as we celebrate the achievements of the United Nations, we pause for self-criticism and self-appraisal.

The Secretary-General has described the Kashmir dispute as one of the oldest items on the United Nations agenda. Forty-eight years of occupation have not crushed the spirit of a noble people, committed to the right of self-determination, committed to the ideals of the United Nations, placing their hopes on the United Nations pledge to hold a plebiscite to determine their future.

Do not close your hearts, your minds, to the torment of Kashmir.

Global interdependence is reality. U Thant said, "It is not starry-eyed idealism", but our "instinctive sense of survival" that brings us all here. Survival today means a common effort to reduce poverty, hunger and disease, to save our environment, to address human needs, to prevent social disintegration and to restore moral values as the foundation for the actions of individuals and nations. Survival means greater democratization within nations and within the international system.

The Security Council needs enlargement, but not in its permanent membership. An Under-Secretary-General should be appointed to give greater emphasis to poverty alleviation. Peace-keeping and conflict resolution mechanisms need strengthening. I invite Member States to Islamabad for a conference for this purpose next year.

It is insufficient for us to denounce atrocities in Rwanda, Bosnia and Kashmir. The perpetrators must be punished. We should create an international criminal court for this purpose. And in the age of the information highway, we need to distinguish between the freedom of expression, the freedom of action and the freedom to pervert, to pollute and to destroy.

New challenges face us. Terrorism, the narcotics trade and arms smuggling are some of the evils that know no boundaries. To meet these challenges, we need the United Nations. To meet these challenges, the United Nations needs an independent financial base. For this, a tax on international financial transactions, on international travel, on the exploitation of space or the oceans, can be considered. Today, the responsibility for the future rests on our shoulders. Let us not shirk that responsibility.

Let us remember the words of the philosopher Spinoza, who said: "Peace is not merely the absence of war. It is a virtue that springs from force of character".

21. Jamaica

Address by
H.E. The Right Honourable Percival James Patterson,
PC, QC, MP, Prime Minister

Fifty years ago the United Nations was founded to promote international peace and security. Its mission was to foster cooperation between nations. The effective functioning of a system of collective security was immediately threatened by bitter and intense super-Power rivalry.

It is proof of its resilience that the United Nations has survived the cold war and prolonged periods of international tension. It has contributed constructively to resolving a proliferation of regional conflicts and tackling other critical problems which imperil international security. There are other sterling achievements which are deservedly a source of pride. It has presided over the decolonization process, resulting in profound geopolitical changes. It has fostered a significant broadening of international programmes, through innovative social and economic programmes, embracing many fields of cooperation. We in Jamaica welcome its latest progeny, the International Seabed Authority, which enables all nations to exploit peacefully the resources of the seabed as the common heritage of mankind.

We concede that the United Nations is by no means perfect. Yet we shudder even to contemplate what kind of world would have emerged without it. It has become an indispensable instrument in the search for global dialogue in the resolution of disputes. It offers the only hope for the harmonization of global interests and for defusing the complex issues which otherwise can so easily ignite.

We sometimes forget that the United Nations is the creature of its Members. We make it what we will. As Member States, it is our solemn obligation to build an effective system which generates lasting peace and social justice. This will entail revitalization and reform in the structure of United Nations organs and the content of their programmes. Reform of the system must reflect the current political realities. It must also be driven by the legitimate right of all Member States to democratic participation on the basis of sovereign equality, no matter what the size, wealth or power. The right of veto must be reviewed. We need a brand new agenda now. It cannot be business as usual. The traditional approach will not suffice.

One billion of the world's population still languish in extreme poverty. The desperation and frustration in the daily struggle for survival by so many often ends in conflicts, straining the bonds of social cohesion and resulting in hostile and violent eruptions.

The eradication of poverty and its attendant evils — starvation, malnutrition, homelessness — must engage the preoccupation of the entire international community. Wherever they occur, these problems cannot be confined to the place of origin. All of us have a stake in their solution. The improvement of the human condition throughout the entire planet must be the immediate objective of all our efforts. If purely humanitarian concerns will not suffice, let us be spurred into action by the practical need to avoid incessant turmoil and thereby maintain global stability.

To recognize the linkages is simply not enough. There is urgent need for the commitment of resources on a scale commensurate with the immensity of the problem. We require a global partnership in which those with the means bear their full share in a global programme to promote development and thereby spare any human being anywhere from the scourge of hunger, ignorance and disease.

Let not this occasion be just another celebration of institutional endurance but a reaffirmation of our collective will to confront the compelling challenges as we face the new millennium. Our prospects for the future are inextricably linked. Let us today renew our pledge to create a world of enduring peace and abundant prosperity for every member of the human race.

2. The State of Israel

Address by
H.E. Mr. Yitzhak Rabin, Prime Minister and Minister of Defence

Shalom. This podium has heard many cries of joy, as well as many words of despair. This podium has seen justice, but it has also seen evil, cruelty and exploitation. In the past 50 years this podium has seen empires fall, and borders erased. But it has also seen people awaken to their freedom and the nations of the world display their flags side by side. It has become possible to fulfil the words of the prophet Isaiah, a son of the Jewish people:

> "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more".

This is the dream which I bring to you today from Jerusalem, the eternal capital of the State of Israel and the heart of the Jewish people.

This morning I appear before you, the Heads of State of the international community, as the Prime Minister of the State of Israel and as the representative of the Jewish people. I also stand before you today as a representative of those for whom the creation of the United Nations came too late. I come here today in the name of the 6 million whose lives were turned into ashes, whose souls ascended to heaven in burning flames. We will never let them be forgotten. I stand here as a representative of the children who will never smile, in the name of the parents whose children were torn from their arms, of the grandmothers and grandfathers whose screams fell on deaf ears.

But we will also never forget our benefactors in this organization of the United Nations who 48 years ago gave us a chance for independence. Up to this very day, we still hear the echoes of the roll-call vote and the two thirds of the Member States of the Organization who, on that fateful evening, voted in support, fulfilling their moral responsibility.

There were also many years when, in this hall, hurtful and unjust decisions were taken against us. There were absurd resolutions which have since been rescinded, such as the resolution equating Zionism with racism. Many ideologies have failed and faded away. But it is Zionism that brought the Jewish people to its historical homeland. Zionism won.

We are grateful to the international community for its encouragement at this historic moment which is unfolding on our little plot of land: the agreement between Israel and the Palestinians — and I wish to congratulate

Chairman Arafat on being our partner in this achievement; the peace treaties between Israel and Egypt, and between Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; and the significant changes in Israel's relationship with the entire Middle East.

The road is still long. However, we are determined to continue until we have brought peace to the region, for our children and our children's children and for all the peoples of the region. This is our mission. We will fulfil it.

Just as we came to you to protest, we now come to praise the change in the relationship between Israel and the international community and the United Nations. However, we cannot be complacent. The United Nations must continue to give expression to the new reality in the Middle East. We must all be at the forefront of the fight against the forces which threaten peace and security in the region for all the countries, for all the peoples of the region, and for the entire world.

We call upon the international community to assist us in locating our missing in action, and in enabling our prisoners of war to return to their homes and families.

As long as children die from hunger, our job here is not yet finished. As long as there is no peace in every corner of the world, our job here is not yet finished.

The United Nations must support those who are working for peace. It must intensify the international struggle against terrorism and its supporters. Terrorism is the world's cancer today. Don't fool yourselves: even if you ignore terror it can enter any of your homes. Terror must be defeated. Peace must win. This is a fight that we cannot afford to lose.

Israel celebrates here with everyone — with all those attending here and with the entire world — 50 years of the United Nations.

23.
The Lao People's Democratic Republic

Address by
H.E. Mr. Khamphoui Keoboualapha, Deputy Prime Minister

[Delivered in Lao; interpretation from French text provided by the delegation]

I am honoured to represent my country, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, at this historic commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. On behalf of the Government and people of Laos I would like to begin by extending our warm greetings to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, our Secretary-General, to Their Excellencies the Heads of State and Government, to the heads of delegations and to the distinguished representatives present on this solemn occasion. In particular, I should like to express my sincere thanks to the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary, chaired by Australia, for its impeccable performance. I should also like to thank Mrs. Gillian Martin Sorensen, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for Public Relations, for her outstanding contribution to this endeavour.

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations offers us an unprecedented opportunity for the international community to learn from the lessons and experience of the past and to use them to make the role of the United Nations more effective and to achieve its ultimate goals, namely, the maintenance of peace and socio-economic development in the world.

During the last five decades, our universal Organization has been sorely tried in many conflicts and upheavals in various parts of the world. Despite the difficulties encountered, the United Nations has not only been able to survive, it has also been able considerably to strengthen its role in solving world problems. Amongst its many activities, there have been many commendable achievements in the area of decolonization, the establishment of the rights of peoples to self-determination and in the prevention of the threat of a nuclear holocaust. Its valuable contribution to the economic and social development of peoples is well known in the international community.

While we welcome what has been achieved, we cannot but confirm the fact that today's world is entering a new era — an era of cooperation for development. Yet the world is still without true peace. Prospects for the settlement of several political conflicts are bleak and remote. As many delegations have pointed out, to this must be added, poverty, disease, war victims, ignorance, backwardness and illiteracy, which are endemic in many countries and pose a major challenge to all nations. In order to remedy this state of affairs, it is essential to restructure the United Nations so that it can play a more effective part.

The realities of the world today show us that true peace cannot prevail until the imperatives of socio-economic development have been adequately addressed. Likewise, there can be no development without peace. The twin concepts of peace and development are therefore mutually complementary and deserve equal consideration.

As part of the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations we in the Lao People's Democratic Republic organized various events with broad popular participation in recognition of the Organization's assistance and cooperation that has contributed to much to the socio-economic development of the Lao people.

It is our hope that this historic commemoration will be a spectacular success.

24. The Islamic Republic of Mauritania

Address by
H.E. Mr. Mohamed Salem Ould Lekhal, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation

[Delivered in Arabic]

I have the pleasure of reading to you the statement that the Prime Minister of Mauritania, Sidi Mohamed Ould Boubacar intended to make on this occasion:

"It gives me pleasure to address the Assembly on this memorable occasion on behalf of the President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, His Excellency Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya.

"Allow me at the outset, Sir, to congratulate you on your election to preside over this historic session. On the occasion of this commemoration my congratulations go also to His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the United Nations Secretary-General, and to all the departments and specialized agencies of the United Nations.

"The fiftieth anniversary of our Organization, which we commemorate today, affords the international community an opportunity to reflect on the developments that have taken place in the world since the United Nations was founded, and to take stock of the Organization's successes and failures.

"The 50 years that have elapsed since the establishment of the United Nations are long enough to allow us to look back and to evaluate the work of the Organization. The object-lessons we can draw from such evaluation would help us chart our course towards the bright future we hope for in line with the lofty goals of our Organization which was originally created to resolve mankind's problems on a basis of justice.

"The United Nations came into being at a particularly painful moment in man's history. The world, battered by war, was yearning for peace, stability and economic reconstruction. There can be no doubt that since then the United Nations, through its specialized agencies and associated bodies, has chalked up considerable successes — in the maintenance of international peace and security, in decolonization, in the promotion of human rights and democracy as well as in the sphere of development assistance and in combating major endemic diseases.

"Here, I take special pleasure in paying a tribute to the invaluable assistance given Mauritania, along with other developing countries, by the United Nations specialized agencies, especially the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture

Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in their respective fields.

"Although it is true that the era of bipolar confrontation has been superseded by an era of greater dialogue for the maintenance of international peace and security, and although striking progress has been made recently in the world, particularly in South Africa, where apartheid has been dismantled, and in the Middle East, where peace has begun to glimmer on the horizon, many countries still continue to live amid the turmoil of armed conflict and the majority of mankind still suffers from poverty and underdevelopment.

"The least developed countries, faced as they are with the effects of the world economic crisis, with an inexorable deterioration in terms of trade, with a pitiless external-debt burden and with a decrease in the volume of international assistance, are struggling on every front.

"The current crisis and the instability it is creating have their origins in the basic structural imbalances of the international economic system. The poverty and destitution of the majority of mankind are a blot on the world's conscience and a threat to peace and international security.

"These imbalances and inequities must be tackled through innovative and bold solutions designed to meet the demands and realities of our shared world. In this connection we note the relevance of the pertinent resolutions adopted at the various world summits convened in recent years.

"The theme of today's commemoration — 'We the peoples of the United Nations ... united for a better world' — must be more than a slogan. May the wisdom and farsightedness of our forebears who wrote the United Nations Charter in 1945 inspire us to adopt the conduct and attitudes that will enable us to avoid the misfortunes and disasters of war and insecurity.

"From this rostrum, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania reaffirms its commitment to work to advance the great ideals of our Organization, to promote and consolidate international peace and security and to strengthen cooperation and solidarity amongst all nations for a world free of war, poverty and underdevelopment."

25. The Republic of the Gambia

Address by
H.E. Mr. Baboucarr Ismaila Jagne, Minister for External Affairs

I have the honour, on behalf of His Excellency Captain Yahya A. J. J. Jammeh, Chairman of the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council and Head of State of the Republic of the Gambia, to deliver this statement on the auspicious occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

The commemoration of the golden jubilee of the United Nations affords us a unique opportunity to review our past achievements and failures and, more to the point, to carve out a new path for our world that would be a community of peoples who need each other for survival. I refer, of course, to an interdependent world, a global village, in which the achievement of socio-economic growth, peace and security in one country would depend largely on similar performance in other countries. Can the developing South grow appreciably without the participation of the industrialized North? Can the North continue to prosper in the face of poverty and deprivation in the South? We in the developing countries of the South need a head start, as was given to Europe in the aftermath of the Second World War through the Marshall Plan. There should be no half-way measures.

Fifty years after the signing of its Charter the United Nations continues to stand as a universal symbol for millions of people all over the world. In our view, the United Nations holds the solution to the quest for world peace and security, and, in this regard, any country that fulfils the obligations of membership should be allowed to take its rightful place in our midst on the basis of the widely accepted principle of universality. That is why my delegation believes that the Republic of China on Taiwan should be re-admitted into the United Nations. It should be noted that there is a peaceful revolution going on in the Republic of China on Taiwan that promises to make the concept of a global village a reality. I refer to the information-technology revolution.

Unlike the United Nations, which has registered 50 years of existence, our Government has recently celebrated a successful year in office. The task of nation-building has not been made easy by the prevailing harsh economic and political climate under which developing countries, like ours, have to operate. The Government of the Republic of the Gambia remains committed, however, to the successful implementation of its Programme of Rectification and Timetable for Transition to Democratic Civilian Rule, as well as the Programme for Socio-Economic Development. Every effort is being made to meet the targets set. It is disheartening to note, however, that our traditional partners in development, rather than joining hands with us in our efforts to build a new society, are looking for the slightest signs of derailment of the transition process. In this way, they could sit back and say, "I told you so!" If we are marching alone, therefore, it is because our partners have decided to march out of step.

The legitimate aspirations of small States will, we hope, henceforth be given greater attention by the United Nations, bearing in mind that the greatness of a country depends not on its size but on the quality of its leadership and the national character of its people.

It is our fervent hope, too, that from now on nations will not be guided in their relationships by the law of the jungle or the misguided instinct of might being right. What happened to the State of Kuwait five years ago is still fresh in our memories. Such aggressive behaviour must never happen again to any country, however big or small.

In our relentless endeavour to promote international peace and security, there should be more consultation between the United Nations and regional organizations. In our view unilateral decisions are, for the most part, counter-productive. A case in point is the dispute between Libya and some Western countries. We believe that the position of the Organization of African Unity on this dispute offers a reasonable starting point for a resolution of the impasse.

The presence of President Fidel Castro at this commemorative event should bring into sharper focus the three-decade-long blockade that has been imposed on the Cuban people. We reiterate that it is high time that this blockade was lifted.

As we commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization we should also recognize that the tasks ahead are startlingly clear, and that we must face them squarely.

There are some who claim that we have lost our self-confidence as a result of the severe and debilitating nature of the crises confronting the international community in the post-cold-war era. My delegation believes, however, that, while we must be frank and critical, especially in owning up to our past shortcomings, we must not lose confidence or faith in our collective ability to summon the necessary will and take the appropriate action in the interests of mankind.

There is growing universal consensus on restructuring the main organs of the United Nations to reflect current international reality. Fifty years after its founding and its enlargement to include almost all the countries of the world, the United Nations today bears no resemblance to the Organization set up after the Second World War to cater to the needs of that period. The

Security Council especially, as the main policy-making arm of the United Nations, should be expanded to really take into account the views and aspirations of the great majority of the membership of the world body.

It is our sincere wish that, as we are poised on the threshold of a new millennium fraught with challenges and opportunities, we, as Members of the United Nations, will be able to stand firm and live up to the confidence reposed in us by our peoples, the peoples of the United Nations.

26. The Italian Republic

Address by

H.E. Mrs. Susanna Agnelli, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Allow me to begin by paying a tribute to you, Mr. President, and to the Secretary-General for the impeccable way in which the Special Commemorative Meeting has been conducted.

Seventy-five years ago at the end of the First World War a few enlightened leaders joined together in pursuit of the common dream of a lasting peace. But their hopes were quickly dashed; some chose almost instantly to explore their own distinct path and the dream came to an end. The result was, two decades later, the outbreak of the Second World War.

Fifty years ago the world's leaders turned even more forcefully to the same dream, and this time succeeded in uniting all countries and peoples around common ideals and values. The result has been 50 years without a major war.

Preserving peace takes good will, untiring efforts and constant support from all United Nations Members. We should always remember the words of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Constitution:

> "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed".

The world has changed in the last 50 years and the United Nations has to change with it. International conflicts have been replaced by internal ones, characterized by political, economic, ethnic and religious tensions that often imply grave humanitarian crises and human rights violations. We must seek new formulas and instruments to face the new crises. Italy is working together with the United Nations to establish a staff college in Turin to train United Nations personnel in various fields.

Respect for international law remains of fundamental importance, but international law must also be adapted to new situations, as exemplified in the creation of the International Tribunals for former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Yet ad hoc solutions are not enough. One step in the right direction would be the establishment of the international criminal court. My country trusts that this court can soon become a reality and has offered to host in Italy the conference for the adoption of its statute.

A reform of our Organization is clearly needed. Efforts are already being made in this direction. Italy is contributing an original proposal for the reform of the Security Council, which would benefit the Organization as a whole and all its Member States by making the Council more democratic, more representative, more transparent and more accountable to the General Assembly.

It is often said that there can be no peace without development and no development without peace. Ensuring the realization of both goals will take serious efforts by all. Developed and developing nations alike must strive to identify the priorities and tools needed to bring increased and more fairly divided prosperity to all the people of the world. Italy's commitment to these ideals is well known. I wish solemnly to reaffirm it before everyone here today.

27. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Address by

H.E. Dr. Mario Enrique Villarroel Lander, President

[Delivered in Spanish]

I am honoured and pleased to come to this great forum of the United Nations, which is now celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, bearing greetings on behalf of another universal institution already more than three quarters of a century old, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. These greetings that I have the honour to convey are backed up by the congratulations and best wishes of the 163 member national societies of the International Federation and of the 20 more that are in the process of formation.

Both the United Nations and our institution were founded by idealists who sought to bring works of enduring peace into the world. In our missions — yours aimed at the construction of a better world with peace, full justice and freedom; and ours aimed at the improvement of life for the world's vulnerable people — have likewise brought together the world's States and their peoples.

The United Nations now has 185 Member States, and over these crucial 50 years of existence it has, despite setbacks and great difficulties, quite clearly functioned well and achieved real successes. Our Federation has 128,600,000 members and volunteers and 260,740 employees, who serve with dedication all over the world.

Both our organizations are directly and continuously affected by daily happenings and events of all kinds involving our members. We are both multinational and cross-cultural in all our ways and customs. Our members represent every religion, culture and ethnic heritage in the world.

As those present well know, the humanitarian mission carried out by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is that of helping the most vulnerable people of the world — the victims of catastrophes, poverty and disease, the disadvantaged, refugees and displaced persons — by seeking to prevent, combat and overcome the things that make them vulnerable.

In our work we cooperate effectively with the United Nations, essentially through its specialized bodies and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. Partly in recognition of the work we have accomplished, our past history and that significant and generous cooperation, the United Nations granted the

International Federation the status of Permanent Observer in the General Assembly, thereby enabling us to share with it our views on the difficult issues affecting humanitarian work around the world today. By way of example, we could mention the complexity of relief operations, often conducted in fragmented States, and the politicization of humanitarian assistance, which underscores the need for organizations such as ours to maintain their neutrality and impartiality at all times.

We should also point out that minefields remain after conflicts are over, killing and maiming for years like some unimaginable curse. Sanctions bring undeserved suffering on civilian populations. Millions of refugees and displaced persons go for decades, sometimes even generations, without knowing a stable existence. Thousands upon thousands of people cross borders in search of better living conditions, sometimes only to find more violations of human rights and more violence than they had fled from. Problems of population, food, water supply and health loom menacingly over the provision of humanitarian needs. And the worst thing is that vindictive revenge matches, or at times exceeds, the insane violence of the enemy, which then faces its own difficulties in turn. These are some of the fundamental issues that the Red Cross and Red Crescent world will deal with in December, with the States signatories of the Geneva Conventions, at the twenty-sixth International Conference of our movement.

Neither can we forget that natural disasters, most of which are unavoidable, continue to take lives, maim people and impoverish nations, while technological disasters and the effects of offences against the environment poison entire regions, which then require years and vast expenditures to recover.

In this large context, it is imperative that we find ways to prevent many disasters if we do not wish to resign ourselves to their cyclic recurrence. However, the funds that donors now target for fostering development are taking a sharp downturn. That is why we decidedly share the view expressed by the Secretary-General in his August 1995 report on the work of the Organization. There he points out that in order to halt this downward spiral, sustainable human development must be instituted everywhere. A new vision of development, and the universal determination to achieve it, are essential for the worldwide progress all peoples desire and need.

We cannot overemphasize the value and fundamental necessity of encouraging and accomplishing sustainable institutional and resource development in order for nations and peoples to continue to prosper and grow. According to a well-known African saying, child-rearing requires the interest and participation of the entire village; in the same spirit, I would say that the growth and health of all humankind require constant commitment and action by all human beings, all nations, all peoples and all humanitarian institutions, such as the one I proudly serve.

We wish this lofty and vital institution at the service of all mankind, and its thousands of hard-working people, a happy fiftieth anniversary and every success in the work they undertake. In their responsible, systematic quest for peace and full justice, they overcome disagreement and discord, and in so doing, pave the way to a comprehensive, lasting peace, without the wars or social conflicts that divide mankind. For the sake of the future of humanity, this must be achieved. This is the lofty mission and the great challenge of the United Nations.

Allow me, on behalf of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, to congratulate the United Nations on its fiftieth anniversary and on its great achievements.

F. Statements delivered at the 40th plenary meeting held on 24 October 1995

1. The Republic of Albania

Address by
H.E. Dr. Sali Berisha, President

I deem it a special pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly for its fiftieth session, as well as the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his skilful leadership of the Organization.

Today, 50 years after the United Nations Charter entered into force, we have come here with the unflinching confidence that the purposes and principles enshrined in it have served and will serve mankind to attain its aspirations to peace and global security, the equality of peoples and their right to self-determination, international cooperation for development and progress, and respect for freedoms and human rights.

The Republic of Albania highly appreciates the contribution of the United Nations during this half-century to the prevention of a global conflict, the settlement of conflicts, the enhancement of international security, and the mitigation of the suffering of millions of people caught in the grip of conflicts or poverty, and its support for economic development in the world and for the democratic process.

The United Nations is commemorating its fiftieth anniversary at an important turning-point in the great achievements of mankind, among them the fall of the Iron Curtain and the collapse of the communist dictatorships, under which many countries, including Albania, suffered a great deal. The fall of the Iron Curtain — and the United Nations also had a positive influence on that event — averted the threat of a large-scale confrontation and ushered in a period of difficult transition for the countries of Eastern Europe, but not only for them. In this process, international institutions turned out to be not always interlocking, but sometimes interblocking.

The international community, heading into the twenty-first century, is growing ever more aware of the need to redirect its advance towards a more reliable international order for everyone. The United Nations and its agencies can render a new contribution to this trend, to the benefit of present history.

As a Balkan country, Albania is greatly concerned about the infringement of human values and the violation of the international conventions and agreements in the former Yugoslavia. We have condemned Serbian aggression — the cause of the suffering of millions of people in Bosnia and Herzegovina — and the creation of "ethnically cleansed" territories by force.

We support the peace talks initiated by the United States, and we take the view that the involvement of troops of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is vital, not only to establish peace and a lasting settlement that does not rehabilitate the aggressor in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also to prevent a chain of conflicts in the Balkans and beyond — something that the ultra-nationalist forces would like to instigate.

Besides, the Balkan crisis started in Kosova, and without a settlement of the Kosova issue, there can be no long-term peace in the former Yugoslavia or stability in the Balkans. It is indispensable that the questions of putting an end to the violation of the human and national rights of the Albanians in Kosova, restoring the democratic institutions there and commencing talks between the Belgrade authorities and the legitimate representatives of the Albanians of Kosova, in the presence of a third party — talks including the question of resolving Kosova's future status in accordance with international agreements — be included in the package of Contact Group negotiations on a solution to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. By insisting on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 49/204 of last December, which includes these demands, the United Nations would be doing a great service for peace and security in our region and continent.

Albania remains determined to oppose the changing of borders through violence and to establish relations of regional cooperation with its neighbours. In compliance with this policy, we consider as a real achievement the commitment — an undertaking by the Presidents of Bulgaria, Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania in this very palace of the United Nations two days ago — to build an integrating horizontal transport and telecommunications corridor to radiate to other States, within and outside the region. This corridor will bring greater closeness and unity between our countries themselves, between the Balkan countries and the European Union, and between East and West. The project has aroused the interest of the European Union and the United States. We would greatly appreciate the commitment of the World Bank and other financial institutions to its realization.

I think that the vertical corridor between Ljubljana and Athens could be the object of another integrating project in the Balkan peninsula.

Over the 50 years since the inception of the United Nations, Albania survived one of the most bitter dictatorial experiences of the continent. In flagrant violation of the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which it had signed, more than 400,000 Albanians were jailed, interned, tortured or executed, and thousands of religious institutions in the country, many of them centuries old, were dynamited and demolished.

I am very pleased to declare today that the rule of law and the market economy have been established in Albania and that all the former communist laws have been replaced. Though, in the past, it was a country where freedoms and human rights were prohibited by law, in Albania today there are hundreds of private newspapers and magazines. From a country where religious beliefs were banned, it has turned into a centre of religious tolerance *par excellence*. A country that used to regard the Bretton Woods institutions as enslaving, it now cooperates very successfully with them, as it does with very many different United Nations agencies.

Although it was the last State to sign the Helsinki Final Act, Albania today meets the criteria of the Copenhagen Document on human and minority rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Though, in the past, a country of total collectivism, the Albania of today attributes 75 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP) to the private sector and boasts a two-digit economic-growth rate and a one-digit inflation rate, while the GDP-foreign debt ratio is less than 10 per cent.

All this testifies that freedom is working in Albania. From the most isolated and closed country of the planet, it has turned into a country which has resolutely committed itself to full integration into the international community — at the regional level by becoming a member of the Council of Europe, and at the global level by actively participating in the activities of this Organization. Albania has attached due importance to fulfilment of its financial obligations to the United Nations and has expressed its willingness, and made preparations, to provide troops for United Nations peace-keeping operations.

The decision of the Albanian Government to declare the country a candidate for a non-permanent Security Council seat allocated to the Eastern European Group for the term 1996-1997 is an expression of the will and readiness of Albania for more active participation in the Organization. We think that the small countries too can make a valuable contribution to the United Nations, and we consider the lack of equitable representation an expression of discrimination against them that violates the very spirit of the Charter.

The Republic of Albania supports the proposal to increase the membership of the Security Council, as this would better conform to the new reality and would add to efficiency in the Council's work. The increase in the number of Members of the Organization — more than threefold — over the last 50 years calls for a reassessment of the role of the small States, which are very interested in having a powerful Organization and aspire to making an active contribution to its activity. We consider it important to create conditions in which these countries enjoy more equitable representation on the main organs.

With the adoption of the Declaration at the end of these Special Meetings, the Republic of Albania will commit itself to cooperation towards revitalizing

the role of the United Nations in the fields of peace, progress, equality and justice, with a view to serving the present generation and guaranteeing a better world for future generations.

2. The Republic of the Philippines

Address by
H.E. Mr. Fidel V. Ramos, President

As a country that signed the United Nations Charter in San Francisco in 1945, and as the current Chairman of the Group of 77, the Philippines considers it an exciting privilege to take part in the work of the United Nations.

In five turbulent decades we have seen the decolonization of virtually the whole world, the rise of human rights to the forefront of world concerns, the engagement of our world community in reform for the welfare of children, women, minorities and the environment, and, most of all, the work of re-engineering development in the poor regions of the world. Now we must ensure that this Organization is adequate to meet the challenges of a new era.

Let us remember that the United Nations was created — as the Charter says —

"to promote ... better standards of life in larger freedom"

all over the world.

Today, we know that poor countries — given the right policies and just a little assistance — can actually develop and raise their standards of living. Yet, sadly, we find in the developed countries, and even in some of the more advanced developing nations, a deplorable effort to turn back the tide by closing their markets to exports from other countries and raising false issues about the environment and labour standards.

We must therefore now press forward even more intensively the work of the United Nations to spread economic progress and social justice, the lack of which is the root cause of conflict. Let us with equal dispatch strengthen the United Nations agencies involved in promoting social justice and economic progress.

The fact remains that the gap between rich and poor nations endures, and in some cases is widening by dangerous proportions. Peace cannot grow in any society gripped by poverty and misery.

In the work of peacemaking, adjustments are clearly in order. While the threat to global peace from nuclear confrontation has greatly diminished, in its place have arisen many regional and ethnic conflicts that are as deadly and that constitute both a challenge and an affront to the collective conscience of mankind. Therefore, we should not neglect the chance to push the United Nations into a more forthright stand against all acts, methods and practices of terrorism, for terrorism is a dagger aimed at the very heart of each nation's security, and at global stability.

Moreover, we must condemn the grotesque obsession with nuclear weapons and other instruments of mass destruction and work concertedly for the conclusion next year of a comprehensive test-ban treaty that will put a stop to all nuclear testing for all time.

On behalf of the Group of 77, I also draw the Assembly's attention to the problems arising from the large-scale migration of workers. For the great majority of them, migration means deprivation of rights, double standards in the eyes of the law and, worse, exposure to violence and abuse. We urge the convening by the United Nations of an international conference specifically to address the plight of migrant workers. That the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families remains to be ratified by many countries is just one more reminder of the difficult road we still have to travel.

Finally, let us not allow this commemoration to pass without addressing the issue of reforming the United Nations, its organization, its processes and its finances. The most efficient organization in the world cannot effectively function without stable and predictable financing. We therefore call upon all Members to fulfil their financial obligations to the United Nations and to do so on time. We support reform of the Security Council itself. We believe that the membership should be enlarged and reapportioned to ensure equitable representation of all geographic regions and of the developing countries.

This is not to express impatience with an institution that has served our world with such dedication for half a century. This is rather to express the hope that our United Nations of the future will be even more caring and proactive and the bridge to the fulfilment of our peoples' aspirations.

The Republic of Zimbabwe

Address by
H.E. Cde. Robert Gabriel Mugabe, President

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is indeed an occasion to reflect on its past, present and future role and function. We join the chorus of well-deserved praise to the United Nations for its sterling role in the prevention of global conflict and for its support of the various struggles for decolonization and the achievement of self-determination.

For us in Africa, the contribution of the United Nations in the decolonization and democratization processes has been an outstanding and honourable one, with the result that today southern Africa, once described by a Portuguese seafarer as a "region of storms", has finally and truly become a region of good hope where the oppressive settler regimes once consolidated by the Unilateral Declaration of Independence, apartheid and other ruthless systems of governance have succumbed to the revolutionary will of the majority, paving the way to peace, stability and regional cooperation.

But the departure of colonial rule has not left us unscathed. The ethnic and tribal hostilities fomented by colonial regimes in their divide-and-rule power strategy have persisted in several of our countries, tearing some of our nations apart. The intensity and viciousness of ethnic wars are as manifest in Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia and Somalia, as they are in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and yet genocide taking place in Rwanda is accorded less significance by the world than genocide in Bosnia. Somalia is left burning while catastrophe stalks. Western United Nations forces withdraw from Somalia only to deploy under the cover of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Bosnia. Where, we ask, is the brotherhood of man? Where, we ask, is man's impartiality? Where, indeed, is the proof of his non-racialism? Is it a scourge to be black, we ask?

What has happened to our universally accepted concept of the global village? Do we need drug traffickers, merchants of terrorism and pandemic diseases to be persuaded that the concept is real enough? I fear that, if we today neglect the tragedy of the millions of the starving poor and refugees, we shall tomorrow surely reap the whirlwind of another "black death".

The many changes that have taken place in our international relations demand to be reflected in the structures of our international organizations. The need for the restructuring and transformation of the United Nations to reflect the realities of today's world and not those of 50 years ago is exceedingly urgent. The Security Council, as now constituted, empowers only a small minority of the victorious allies of a war of half a century ago to continue to wield sweeping powers that enable it to take or block decisions affecting the destiny of the majority of Member States sitting in the General Assembly. This despotism in the Security Council, especially the power of veto, defies logic and runs counter to the very democratic principles and values that are demanded of Member States in their domestic political practices. We have listened to the statements of the leaders of these historically privileged countries, and none of them made any reference at all to the need for democratizing this institution. I ask them all to answer the question of whether or not they accept the principle of democracy for the United Nations. Is it yes or no?

Membership in the Security Council must reflect a fair geographical representation of all the regions in the world. Indeed, the United Nations system as a whole needs to be reformed and revitalized in order to render it more transparent, accountable and democratic.

Our hope that the establishment of the World Trade Organization would herald a new framework for an equitable and fair international trading system is already proving forlorn. Current trade relations are still bedeviled by the old reflexes of protectionism and unilateralism. The Bretton Woods institutions remain unreformed and, as their structures continue to defy democracy, they continue to act as dictatorial taskmasters on behalf of the world's rich and powerful nations, their harsh and punitive measures thus wreaking havoc on our poor societies still struggling to wriggle out from under the colonial legacy of misery and developmental neglect.

It is no secret that the United Nations is now in the grip of a financial crisis. For the Organization to meet its growing responsibilities and challenges, Member States have to honour their Charter obligations. A car without fuel will not perform; neither can a United Nations without resources.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm my country's commitment to work for a better world, while reiterating the view that the challenge of today is for us to transform and strengthen our world body for the benefit of future generations. A democratic world needs democratic institutions at both the national and the international levels. The United Nations must therefore reflect that world.

4. The Republic of Lithuania

Address by
H.E. Mr. Algirdas Mykolas Brazauskas, President

[Delivered in Lithuanian: English text provided by the delegation]

All of us gathered here in the most important assembly hall of the planet are united by the hope and belief in a new world order, in a world based on the unity of nations in the pursuit of peace and prosperity on Earth. It is not solely for the purpose of marking this special occasion that we should reflect upon the experience of this unique Organization. We must enhance its effectiveness and establish new collective mechanisms to surmount the challenges of the present and those that lie ahead.

Since the collapse of the bipolar system, the world has been more acutely confronted with old and seemingly intractable problems in the fields of international migration, population and the environment. New concerns dealing with the development and consolidation of peace, social justice and democracy have emerged.

Lithuania considers the State responsibility for good governance and economic and social stability to be the means to guarantee human security and prosperity. At the same time, we are striving to build a civil society that can actively and responsibly participate in the resolution of international problems.

Today Lithuania takes pride in its good relations with all neighbouring States. These relations are based on law and the principles of good-neighbourliness. To achieve this, we had to transcend negative historical stereotypes, as well as to overcome re-emergent suspicion and mistrust. The world could achieve significant progress if the majority of States succeeded in maintaining such cooperative relations with their own neighbours.

Today, the role of the United Nations has increased significantly in the realm of international peace and security. Lithuania supports the leading role of the United Nations in peace-keeping operations and the recommendations laid out in "An Agenda for Peace".

Present-day realities confirm that the ideological confrontations of the cold-war era have been replaced by long-term localized conflicts. The importance of preventive diplomacy becomes even more evident in preventing the outbreak of armed conflicts and the humanitarian crises that often accompany them. For this reason, Lithuania greatly values the work of the Organization in this area as well as in post-conflict situation management. The new era demands more effective and complementary interaction with regional structures, such as the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Western European Union.

We are in favour of a more defined distribution of goals and tasks and increased coordination of the respective activities of United Nations peace-keeping operations and preventive diplomacy missions. Lithuania actively participates in these initiatives and is willing to increase its involvement in the maintenance of international security.

Lithuania is well aware of the fact there could be no other United Nations. At the same time, we understand the need for reform of this institution. The United Nations, like its Member States, has had its share of successes and failures. The Organization has not had the capacity to keep up with the ever-evolving challenges facing the international community. The United Nations has thus fallen into a deep crisis and a difficult financial situation. Regrettably, this also points to a clear lack of collective political will on the part of Member States.

Reform must begin with the strengthening of the United Nations system and the expansion of the Security Council. Lithuania supports the inclusion of Germany and Japan among the permanent members of the Security Council and seeks to ensure the adequate representation of the interests of small States in this body. The Organization must resolutely meet the ever-evolving challenges to humankind: transnational crime, drug trafficking, international terrorism and the spread of AIDS.

We do not question the priority accorded to international peace and security issues. But the security and peace-keeping functions of the United Nations should not be pursued at the expense of economic and social programmes. We will seek to have the economic and social policy needs and priorities of the countries in transition reflected in the "Agenda for Development", as we did earlier this year with respect to the work of the international conferences in Copenhagen and Beijing.

Fifty years of United Nations work have been crowned with tangible and laudable achievements. Most importantly, the number of democratic States has increased dramatically over those years. The global nuclear threat has decreased. Yet the thread of life remains vulnerable. We have no other choice but to live together, seeking to better understand one another and to cooperate more closely.

That is the basis of my optimism and faith in man as well as in the future.

5. The Republic of Finland

Address by
H.E. Mr. Martti Ahtisaari, President

The founding fathers of the United Nations had the vision of a global system of collective security. Mindful of the lessons of the 1930s, they wanted to ensure prompt action by the United Nations to keep watch on the state of peace and security, seek cooperative solutions, and deal effectively with aggression. The cold war ruined this vision. Now we have the historic opportunity to restore the United Nations as originally conceived. Yet our Organization is crippled by massive non-payment of properly assessed contributions, in breach of Charter obligations. I am deeply concerned about this tendency to run down the United Nations.

It is also customary to criticize the United Nations and its Secretariat. I have worked in the United Nations, and I know that there are a great many dedicated and competent men and women in this Organization, led by our Secretary-General.

Today the world needs the United Nations for global governance: to foster peace and enhance the rights of every human being through sustainable development. Our immediate task is to provide effective follow-up to the successful conferences held in Rio, Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing.

More than ever, the Security Council is needed to ensure effective action for peace. A representative Security Council, reflecting the realities of today's world, is the best guarantee of effectiveness. Finland therefore supports an enlarged Security Council, including new permanent members from all regions.

The end of the cold war has provided the United Nations with new opportunities to strengthen international peace and security. It has helped the world to focus on threats to our common security which are not amenable to resolution by military means. This is already true in Europe, the principal theatre of the cold war, with the European Union as the main actor projecting stability and prosperity throughout the continent.

Two recent reports of the Secretary-General have focused global discussion. "An Agenda for Peace" and "An Agenda for Development" provide a wealth of ideas to meet the challenges of the post-cold-war world. It is our duty, as leaders, to turn ideas into practice.

I shall take up one proposal which the Secretary-General placed before us in his Agenda for Peace. He has suggested that the United Nations should have its own rapid reaction force when there is an emergency need for peace-keeping troops.

I find myself in profound sympathy with the Secretary-General's concerns. My own involvement with the United Nations has convinced me of the need for the international community to react in a rapid and concrete manner to emergencies. I am convinced that the United Nations should establish, as part of the reform, an effective, integrated, multinational crisis management capability to meet the challenge of future emergencies.

Discussion to date has shown that perhaps the most practical way to make progress in the short term is to further develop the existing stand-by forces arrangement. Stand-by arrangements are not enough to guarantee the availability of troops. Therefore we must think ahead. The Nordic experience in peace-keeping provides a solid foundation for innovation. The Nordic countries have already created two joint battalions that now operate successfully as part of the United Nations peace forces in the former Yugoslavia.

A well trained and lean force that could be quickly dispatched by the United Nations or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to perform demanding humanitarian or peace-keeping missions is a necessity for the future. The Government of Finland is at present preparing a Finnish stand-by force for this very purpose.

I propose that the Secretary-General entrust an eminent person, independent and well qualified in both the military and political practice of peace-keeping, to sift from the plethora of ideas a limited number of practical and politically feasible recommendations for action by the time of the next General Assembly.

For five decades, the United Nations has sought to provide security in the broadest sense of the word. The world Organization has been a source of inspiration and an obstacle to cynicism. We may not always recognize its efforts, and we may sometimes even resent them. But we cannot do without it.

6. The Republic of Armenia

Address by
H.E. Mr. Levon Ter-Petrossian, President

[*Delivered in French*]

Armenia, as a State, was not among the original signatories of the United Nations Charter. Nevertheless Armenia, as a nation, had sent to the battlefields of the Second World War some 600,000 of its sons and daughters, nearly half of whom never came home. It is in their memory that Armenia, as an independent State, is proud to take its rightful place in this Assembly to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

In view of the situation in 1945, it was only natural that the Charter of the United Nations should deal primarily with the maintenance of international peace and security. The United Nations played a pivotal role in the reconstruction that followed the devastation of the world war, and it has so far been able to prevent the world being plunged into global conflict. Even during the cold war, the very existence of an international forum in which countries might discuss global issues prevented the outbreak of many conflicts.

The United Nations continues to play a constructive role in containing regional conflicts, for instance in the negotiations aimed at settling the conflict in Nagorny Karabakh under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. In this respect, I should like to reaffirm the resolve of the Armenian side to comply with the longstanding cease-fire and to transform it, as soon as possible, into a lasting peace.

Safeguarding peace is but one of the objectives of the Organization. The United Nations, and the world, have made significant progress on many fronts since 1945. Thanks to the decolonization process, the elimination of apartheid, the collapse of the old order and the emergence of new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe and in the former Soviet Union, hundreds of millions of people have been assured the fundamental right of self-determination and their rightful voice in the community of nations.

Our Organization has also enabled nations the world over to express their views on a broad range of subjects, including strategies for economic and social development, human rights, environmental protection and the promotion of international law. At the same time, the work of United Nations specialized agencies has directly improved the lives of millions of people throughout the world.

Armenia would like the United Nations to be strengthened and to be accorded greater respect. We are grateful to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros-Ghali, for the tireless efforts he has made to reform the United Nations system in this changing world. Under his guidance, substantial progress has been made in the management of the Organization. At his initiative, discussions have taken place in recent years on the proposals he made in "An Agenda for Peace", in "An Agenda for Development" and, more recently, in his "Supplement to 'An Agenda for Peace'".

Before concluding, I should like to salute all those who have served the United Nations over the past 50 years, and to pay special tribute to the men and women who have given their lives in the line of duty. We honour their memory, and we pledge to continue their mission.

7. The Republic of Haiti

Address by
H.E. Mr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, President

[Delivered in French]

I am pleased to greet Your Excellencies on behalf of the Government and the people of Haiti. Today, both in our own country and in the diaspora — or our "tenth province" — 7 million Haitians chant in unison, "Continued peace, happiness and success for the great family of the United Nations".

Celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is especially meaningful for the world's first independent black republic. It gives us the opportunity also to celebrate the first anniversary of the return of democracy to Haiti. Our return to Haiti, on 15 October 1994, after three years of exile, and the peace achieved through this democratic process constitute a political miracle. I say humbly but unequivocally that this is the first time that such a miracle has taken place anywhere in the world. It came about thanks to the heroism and courage of the Haitian people, to the leadership of President Clinton, to you, Mr. Secretary-General, and to all of our dear United Nations friends. Gratitude is the heart's memory; let the beating of our hearts express our intense joy at having together achieved this miracle of the century.

Now that peace has been restored, domestic production has increased by 3 per cent, while in 1994 it had declined by 10 per cent. By December 1995, the rate of growth may rise to 4.5 per cent. Earnings are 85 per cent higher than those of the two years preceding our return. Today they amount to 2.231 billion gourdes, or 7.5 per cent of our gross national product. Moreover, our budget deficit has been reduced from 1.4 billion gourdes to 350 million gourdes. In three years' time, 85 per cent of our population will be not illiterate, but literate.

These figures give us new hope and are a sign of the light of peace that floods our hearts, dazzles our eyes and drives out the shadows of violence. Gunfire no longer crackles. *Zam yo bèbè*. The army has met with disaster; it no longer exists. *Li kraze*. In our Parliament, I hope we shall soon be observing its official funeral.

The establishment of a national police force and the enactment of judicial reform are breathing new life into our democracy. Justice safeguards social bonds; it nurtures reconciliation, dignity and respect for the rights of the individual. It is in that context that legislative elections have taken place as we await our presidential elections, which are certain to be free, honest and democratic.

Yes, today the blooming of these first flowers of democracy is emitting a sweet aroma of peace and hope; may the great United Nations family spread this delicious perfume throughout the world. May this peace bloom at last in Bosnia, in Georgia, in Rwanda, in Burundi.

By the year 2050 the world's population will have reached 10 billion. May our hearts be fired by enthusiasm to prepare a better world for these people and to light up the history of mankind as it approaches the end of the millennium. In that way the United Nations will be crowned with a halo of glory, pride and peace.

If we all stand together, this will be possible, for: alone we are weak; together we are strong; all together, we are *lavalas*.

8. The Republic of Malawi

Address by
H.E. Mr. Bakili Muluzi, President

The United Nations is 50 years old today, and this is cause for celebration. Where I come from, old age is traditionally associated with wisdom. The United Nations has learnt from its experience and has become wiser with time. This is one of the many reasons why we, the people of Malawi, believe that the United Nations deserves to be supported, and to be treated with even greater respect than ever before.

It would have been nice if the United Nations had performed miracles these past 50 years. It would have been nice if, for example, it had succeeded in preventing human beings from wantonly slaughtering each other on a regular basis. The United Nations has failed to perform this particular miracle: human beings all over the world continue to kill each other for political, tribal, religious and all sorts of other reasons. Despite our wishes, the world has yet to become one big, happy family. And this means that the United Nations still has a crucial role to play in bringing peace, stability, freedom and justice to the world.

Malawi applauds the role played by the United Nations in promoting social and economic development and in championing the causes of the world's poor. The "Agenda for Peace" recently devised by the United Nations firmly established the linkage between global peace and development. The simple fact is that we can never have peace until we have social justice, and we can never have social justice until we address the economic issues faced by most of our Member countries today.

We also wish to applaud the United Nations for its campaign to promote the rule of law among Member States, as shown by the Organization's uncompromising insistence on the observance of human rights.

With the cold war over and political ideology playing less and less of a role in international affairs, it is unfortunate that one great country, China, remains divided for ideological reasons. Malawi therefore wishes to register its support for efforts to reconcile the two sides and to resolve the issue of division with a view to eventual reunification. This would be within the spirit of democracy which the United Nations stands for.

Malawi wishes to join other Member States in endorsing the platforms of action agreed upon at the World Summit for Social Development, the

International Conference on Population and Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, as constituting a noble and viable agenda for the United Nations as it sets out on the journey into the next 50 years and beyond.

Once again, the people and the Government of Malawi congratulate you, Mr. Secretary-General, and you, Mr. President, on this most auspicious occasion. Long live the United Nations.

9.
The Republic of Colombia

Address by
H.E. Dr. Ernesto Samper Pizano, President

[*Delivered in Spanish*]

The commemoration of the first 50 years of the United Nations is an excellent opportunity to look at the past and plan for the future.

A review of history teaches us lessons we cannot ignore. Genuine multilateralism, that is, decisions based on the will of majorities, has allowed humanity to rid itself of some of its worst problems, such as colonialism, apartheid and the nuclear arms race.

Last week, in Cartagena de Indias, the Non-Aligned Movement held its XI Conference of Heads of State or Government, and Colombia assumed the chairmanship of the Movement for the next three years. In Cartagena, the Non-Aligned countries reaffirmed the full validity of the Movement and its will to work actively for the benefit and in the interests of the countries of the South.

The significance of our action will depend upon our capacity to give appropriate answers to questions arising from the international situation of the 1990s and to prepare ourselves successfully to face the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Although it is true that the cold war has ended, as we all know, poverty persists; so do the environmental problems that are turning our earth into a desert. Greed to acquire armaments still hovers over the earth like a spectre.

Old ideological barriers have given way to new ones: new protectionist trade barriers that limit the access of our products to the markets of industrialized countries; technological barriers that isolate us from the knowledge we need to achieve development; and ethnic and religious barriers in whose name some continue to kill each other.

In Cartagena, we reaffirmed our will to continue the struggle against all those new barriers that impede our development, as was once the case with the wall that separated two seemingly irreconcilable political systems.

The problems that affect our people have an increasingly transnational nature and this fact, instead of leading us to accept a new era of intervention, must be faced with a firm will to cooperate with one another. The great challenge before us springs from the understanding that the problems that are bringing us together march at a much faster pace than the solutions we should already have agreed upon in order to resolve them.

International solidarity is not only the best answer: it is the only answer. We need each other because the solution to world problems can be obtained only through common actions. One such common action is that required to tackle the problem of drug trafficking.

Colombia has been the country most victimized by drug trafficking and the country which has combated it most successfully. The year 1995 will be known to history as the period of greatest achievements against the drug cartels. The Cali Cartel has been brought to justice, and the eradication of illegal crops has reached unprecedented levels. We have put 80 per cent of the cocaine market out of business. Coca paste prices are now 10 times less than they were, while consumer prices have risen significantly.

Whether these achievements will bring progress in this struggle or not will depend upon the responsibilities that the countries of the world assume. We cannot continue this unending debate over who is responsible, with each country blaming its neighbour for its own faults. We have to understand that a business which moves more than $500 billion per year cannot be combated by one country or one group of countries acting alone. We are all responsible. The moment is now or never.

President Bill Clinton was right when, in his statement last Sunday, he highlighted the fact that the blows we have inflicted upon drug traffickers have been the fruit of our common work. He is also right in pointing out the need to face squarely up to the problem of consumption and its relation to the increase in social criminality. Colombia associates itself with President Clinton's declaration of war against the laundering of money and assets flowing from the illicit drug market.

Colombia is convinced that the success of these actions will depends on the extent to which they are carried out at the multilateral level, and not only in our country. Money laundering, which is typically an international crime, involves actors and behaviours that must be prosecuted and punished in all countries, wherever they may arise. Let us punish financial systems that, wherever in the world they may be, whether by omission or commission, allow the pollution of their accounts with the profits flowing from drug trafficking.

Let us punish all industries worldwide that knowingly sell chemicals used as precursors for the industrial processing of drugs. Let us penalize all companies, wherever they may be, that facilitate the acquisition of durable or non-durable goods or that promote the smuggling of goods into producing countries to facilitate money laundering and to hide these infernal profits, as well as those real estate enterprises that serve the same despicable ends.

Let us thoroughly examine the actions of the gambling houses, casinos, and lotteries throughout the world that pander to the unholy marriage between gambling and drugs.

My country, which has paid such huge human and economic costs in this often lonely struggle, has been asking for the convening of a world conference against drugs that will combine together the unequivocal will of the producing, consuming and distributing countries in the common and firm resolve to mount an integrated attack on this scourge.

It is almost 10 years now since we subscribed to the Vienna Convention against Illegal Drugs and Psychotropic Substances in the hope that it would serve as an instrument for the implementation of a strategy of this kind. It was certainly a great step forward. But we cannot declare ourselves fully satisfied: the trafficking and consumption of drugs have increasingly expanded to more countries, poisoning more youngsters every day.

Colombia would feel that the memory of the thousands of victims of this long and cruel war would be redeemed if the world agreed to make a sincere and precise analysis of the need for effective international cooperation to overcome the most important problem affecting mankind at the end of this century: the problem of drugs.

The creation of the United Nations 50 years ago sowed the seeds of hope for mankind: hope for peace and progress, faith in peaceful mechanisms for the settlement of conflicts, and belief in multilateralism as we confront the most wrenching issues before humankind.

Today we have to rethink what we are, in order to know what we want to become. The Bible teaches us that without vision, the people perish. The task of the new United Nations system must be to regain that vision, so that we may continue to prevail as a civilization, as a democracy and as rational human beings.

10. The Republic of Slovenia

Address by

H.E. Mr. Milan Kučan, President

[*Delivered in Slovenian; English text provided by the delegation*]

I have the pleasure of adding the sincere congratulations and fresh hopes of the Republic of Slovenia to those already received by the United Nations on this occasion. We have the right to trust the United Nations and, at the same time, to expect much from it.

The United Nations has undoubtedly justified its establishment in its 50 years of existence. However, the goals defined in the Charter of the United Nations have not yet been realized. On the contrary, in the key area of its activity, the maintenance of international peace and security, the United Nations is burdened by an alarming lack of success. Let me mention only Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Balkans, because this alone is example enough. Its lack of readiness or its inability to recognize the true aggressive nature of the war against this sovereign country, a Member of the United Nations, and its procrastination and inconsistency in dealing with the issue of succession in the former Yugoslavia were serious errors. These errors could not be redressed by later political, military, humanitarian and financial involvement, although this managed to mitigate to a commendable extent the consequences of violence against innocent civilian populations.

I wish to stress that the genuine effectiveness of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security is of crucial importance for the future of the Organization. It must continually demonstrate its relevance, credibility, and legitimacy: it must confirm its capability. For the United Nations, every moment is the moment of truth, the moment to face itself.

The Organization is in its worst political and financial crisis to date. This seems to be a contradiction, since mankind expects ever more from the United Nations and has placed upon it increasingly heavy burdens for the maintenance and restoration of peace. Yet it is logical: under the weight of events the United Nations has not been reformed either organizationally, financially or psychologically. There is much truth in the thought that there is nothing wrong with the United Nations, but rather with its Members. The widely held definition of the United Nations is that it is the sum of its Members. This is true, but the United Nations is more than just that. If it were only the sum of its Member States, it would be similar to any other intergovernmental organization. But the United Nations is more. Through the Security Council it has at its disposal the attributes of State powers such as resources and arms.

It can and must be the highest moral authority in the judgement of violations of the basic rules of international life, coexistence and human rights. From this point of view, the United Nations cannot be neutral. One of the conditions for the revitalization of the United Nations is whether it aspires to lay down moral standards in political and legal relations among nations. Such a role does not allow detachment regarding the worst threats to peace and cooperation, but rather demands moral engagement and commitment.

The moral credibility of the United Nations, the indisputable impression that it stands behind its principles, is the basis of the next major task the world expects of the United Nations: the implementation of preventive diplomacy. There is no one more suitable to engage in preventive diplomacy than the Secretary-General of a world Organization which is more than the sum of its Member States and more than the sum of the major Powers.

To become reconciled with ineffectiveness would mean abandoning the goals on which this Organization was founded. It would mean the self-abrogation of the United Nations. We must openly confront this danger. With all gravity, we must weigh the relationship between free will as a basic principle of the United Nations and the need for responsible conduct according to the principles stated in its Charter, a precondition for its effectiveness as well as for its reputation, authority and credibility. No sovereign country has been forced to join the United Nations. Membership is based on free choice, which presupposes an acceptance of the obligations and measures imposed by the founding principles of the United Nations. Whoever fails to respect these principles or acts in contradiction to them acts against the very essence of the Organization and can have no place in it. The door to membership must be open wide for all to enter if they wish, but it must also be open for the departure of those who work against the mission of the United Nations. Everyone must choose his own fate and accept responsibility for it. The principle of free will precludes indifference to, and lack of solidarity with, the common will and effort.

I hope that the Member States of the United Nations which have the greatest responsibility for the Organization have heard the expressions of concern at this session, that they have heard that preventive diplomacy and a policy of engagement by the United Nations must become a reality before emerging conflicts grow into acute crises.

Of course, responsibility for the future of the United Nations rests with all of us together. Slovenia has already presented its concrete proposals for the reform of the United Nations. We are a part — a small part — of this Organization. In it we have placed all our hopes, and we are fully prepared to carry our share of responsibility for its success, credibility, and effectiveness.

[*Continued in English*]

The people of Slovenia trust that the United Nations will live up to the challenges of our time and fulfil the hopes of the coming century.

11. The Republic of Uzbekistan

Address by
H.E. Mr. Islam A. Karimov, President

[Delivered in Russian]

I want to take this opportunity to dwell on a number of issues which, to our mind, are significant in the context of the problems being discussed at this Special Commemorative Meeting of the General Assembly.

One of these urgent contemporary issues is that of regional security and stability. The seminar on security and cooperation in Central Asia held in Tashkent in September this year with the direct support of the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, was attended by representatives of 31 States and 6 authoritative international organizations. It reaffirmed that global security can be achieved through regional security; in other words, that the path to globalism lies through regionalism.

Achieving understanding among States in specific areas and regions, and especially in areas now called "hot spots", requires that we achieve peace throughout the world. This is of special importance for the Central Asian region, which possesses huge natural, mineral, raw material and strategic resources and which, more and more, is being turned into an arena for rivalry of geopolitical and economic interests, as well as for what I must call the ambitions of many States.

The continuing war in Afghanistan has actually begun to threaten peace and stability not only in Central Asia, but in the whole world. This war has already been going on for 17 years; it has brought immeasurable suffering to the Afghan people. This war is becoming a source of international terrorism, drug trafficking, and the proliferation of armaments, and is aggravating the already tense situation in neighbouring Tajikistan. We believe that the conflict in Afghanistan could be settled, first of all, by eliminating the interference of external forces. Such interference is the basic reason for the continuing war today in Afghanistan. We appeal once again to the Security Council to impose an embargo on the supply of arms to Afghanistan, irrespective of its source.

Afghanistan should be not the object of hostilities, but the object of peace and stability. Uzbekistan, as well as the whole Central Asian region, would like to see the implementation of the promising projects supported by many international institutions and companies and connected with construction of rail and transport communications through the territory of Afghanistan so that access for Central Asia to the Indian Ocean ports can become a reality.

These projects will help to involve millions of the Afghans in peaceful activities to create new, shorter communications as well as trade and economic ties, and to change, in principle, geopolitical realities in this particularly tense region of the world.

I feel it necessary to refer from this lofty rostrum to the ecological disaster connected with the drying-up of the Aral sea. This problem is acquiring a global character, and has a negative impact on the biosphere, the living conditions, the health and even the heredity of tens of millions of people.

Today it is absolutely clear that this problem cannot be solved without the support and assistance of international financial institutions and developed countries, with the United Nations playing the organizing role.

With regard to the need to reform United Nations structures and to improve its performance, it is now essential; first, to expand the membership of the Security Council by including as permanent members such States as Germany and Japan which today play an important role in world politics; secondly, to strengthen the powers of the Secretary General of the United Nations in order to ensure the effective implementation of United Nations decisions; and, thirdly, it is becoming increasingly clear that cooperation between the United Nations and international and regional organizations needs to be revitalized and United Nations regional structures need to be developed further in order to prevent and solve crises. Today the growing scale and volume of arms sales, especially in our region, are a cause of great concern.

Many countries do not even make a secret of the fact that arms sales have become for them one of the main and basic sources of foreign currency, and they pay no attention whatsoever to the question of who these arms will be aimed at tomorrow and what purposes they will be used for.

The situation in which the same interests are pursued through projects for selling nuclear technologies, even though they are accompanied by declarations of peaceful intentions, is of even greater concern. Uzbekistan advocates providing appropriate international guarantees on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the earliest possible conclusion of the comprehensive test-ban treaty.

We cannot agree with the rhetoric now ringing out here and there which is designed to take us back to military and political confrontation and conflict between blocs. For us, isolation is very destructive. The only right path for us is integration into the world community, despite the fact that we see certain difficulties and shortcomings in this process.

Today the newly independent States on the post-Soviet space are in the process of laying the foundations of their national statehood and advancing towards democratic reform, for which they need the assistance and support of the world community to implement reforms and expedite their integration into international political, economic and financial structures. I mean not only material and financial assistance but also, and above all, the moral and political support we need for our sovereign and independent development. It is now of crucial importance for us to further maintain the consistency and irreversibility of reform, adherence to democratization and a free market economy, stability and sustainable development, and mutually beneficial and equal relations with all peace-loving states. This will enable us to secure the place we deserve in the world community.

12. The Republic of Paraguay

Address by
H.E. Mr. Juan Carlos Wasmosy, President

[*Delivered in Spanish*]

It is a privilege for me to represent my country, Paraguay, as President of the Republic, at this commemoration today of the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Charter of the United Nations. It is also a great honour for me to be part of this historic moment in the life of the United Nations, since Paraguay was one of the founders of the Organization.

Paraguay has the same fervour and conviction today about the United Nations as it had when it signed the Charter, and it continues to support the Organization with a view to its pursuing its two main aims: the preservation and maintenance of peace in the world, and the construction of peace on the basis of the harmonious and balanced development of the Member States. Our firm belief in the ideals of the United Nations and our support are not shaken or destroyed by some failures which the United Nations may have suffered. We restate our conviction that this Organization is absolutely necessary in our world to carry out the two fundamental tasks the peoples of the United Nations undertook to accomplish after the butchery of the Second World War.

Paraguay solemnly pledges to continue to support the principles enshrined in the Charter and, in so doing, we give our full support to and have every confidence in the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali. Mr. President, you can be certain that Paraguay has honoured and will continue to honour its commitments with regard to the United Nations. Together, we have travelled a long road for 50 years and today we see with great satisfaction that the objectives for which this world Organization was established are being reached, although perhaps not as quickly as we would like.

Our growing experience, the increasing resolve of States to preserve peace, and the increasingly ardent desire of each and every State to make progress, to develop and to seek higher living standards for their peoples spur us on to strengthen this Organization, which stands at the head of a system that covers every human activity.

All States are duty-bound to support and contribute to the financing of the United Nations. Failure to lend the support it needs to be able to work towards its aims is inconceivable. States, large and small, have the same obligation to make available to the United Nations the means it needs to reach its goals. Paraguay is up-to-date with its obligations.

The Republic of Paraguay has been an enthusiastic and devoted participant when called on to act in various organs of the United Nations. We have also received since 1951 considerable technical cooperation, which we deeply appreciate, and we hope that it will continue since it is an important factor in the development of our countries.

Our Organization has played and continues to play a primary role in the world as a guiding light in questions of great importance in the life of nations, such as the monumental task of ensuring adherence to the principles of the protection of human rights, decolonization, support for democracy and freedom, the legal equality of States, the codification of international law — a shining example of which is the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea — and many other principles that are now accepted pursuant to multilateral treaties.

At this time, Paraguay enjoys full democracy, with total freedom and respect for human rights. This political situation emerged after a long period of obscurantism, which, fortunately, was cast aside following free elections that brought to the presidency after almost 50 years a civilian who is committed to consolidating this democracy and to the ideals and principles of the national Constitution in force.

Paraguay accepts international law as part of its national legislation and recognizes international justice as the highest instance for the peaceful solution of conflicts. Thus, Paraguay has acted as mediator in the settlement of disputes and has often had recourse to international tribunals in regard to international conflicts and received judgements in its favour.

Paraguay, at the invitation of the President of the fiftieth session of the United Nations General Assembly, Professor Diogo Freitas do Amaral, and in keeping with its steadfast devotion to peace, has decided to make another contribution to ending the scourge of war and to cooperate in the peaceful settlement of disputes.

For those reasons, and inspired by the lofty ideals of the United Nations, I have the honour to announce to the Assembly my Government's decision to recognize as compulsory, in relation to any other State accepting the same obligation, the jurisdiction of the Court in all legal disputes, as set forth in Article 36, paragraph 2, of the Court's Statute.

The relevant declaration will be formalized and deposited in accordance with the provisions of Article 36, paragraph 4, of the Statute of the Court, once the parliamentary steps required by my country's Constitution have been complied with.

In conclusion, let me say that this decision to recognize mankind's highest Court is the result of prior consultation and has the blessing of my country's principal political entities. Paraguay wishes to renew its faith in the law as a part of the new stage in human civilization.

Thus, armed with the Charter, we will overcome our problems and reaffirm our principles, and, with imagination and courage, we will finally achieve the more just international society that was conceived 50 years ago by men and women who believed it worth while to struggle to attain freedom.

13. The State of Kuwait

Address by

His Highness Sheik Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir

[Delivered in Arabic]

I open my remarks by offering to you all heartfelt greetings, coupled with my sincere wishes for the prosperity of mankind.

On this solemn occasion marking the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, I feel that the peoples of the world, despite their different persuasions, have come to a virtual consensus that this world body does indeed represent a real sanctuary to which they have recourse to resolve their disputes and address their concerns. This is especially true when small nations fall prey to threats by larger dictatorial regimes bent on devouring them.

I wish to take this occasion, on behalf of the people of Kuwait, to put on record our acknowledgement of the vital role played by the United Nations in backing my country in the face of aggression. At this point in time, I hope that the United Nations support will continue until the relevant Security Council resolutions are implemented in full. In this context, I wish to highlight the human tragedy of Kuwaiti and third-country prisoners who remain held in Iraqi jails.

Global confidence in the United Nations system has been on the rise since it has become a beacon of hope for alleviating and redressing the human suffering caused by aggression and oppression in all their forms and manifestations. We trust that the Organization will become even more effective in confronting mankind's global problems in the coming century. Such a contribution would indeed consolidate the lofty human values of benevolence, cooperation and interdependence for the common benefit of all human beings who yearn for a peaceful and dignified life.

There is no doubt that the aspirations pinned on the United Nations will remain high. If anything, this is yet another testimony to the relevance of and confidence in this great institution. At the same time, we have to be realistic and recognize that the United Nations is not and cannot be a miracle worker. In order to appreciate the immense achievements of the United Nations and their wider implications, we have to make a fair and balanced review not only of its political performance but also of its delivery in the areas of development, culture, social affairs and health, to name but a few. Special mention should be made of the services and aid provided by the United Nations specialized agencies to the countries of the third world.

We value the input of all cultures in the evolution of the parameters of the world envisioned by the founders of the United Nations. Meanwhile, we do recognize our due share of the historical responsibility for fashioning a community in which the principles of tolerance, understanding and respect for the rule of law and international treaties reign supreme. This would lead to a state of human peace of mind free of the threats of hegemony, the insanity of bigotry and the fear generated by war and aggression.

I come here on behalf of Kuwait to express sentiments of gratitude, to extend congratulations to the United Nations and to reaffirm our commitment to the principles enshrined in its Charter.

We look forward to a future full of hope and peace, and we pray to Allah, the Almighty, to help mankind realize the human aspirations embodied by the United Nations.

14. The Republic of Mozambique

Address by
H.E. Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, President

The celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is a landmark in the history of humanity. We celebrate, first and foremost, the success of the United Nations in saving generations from the scourge of war. We celebrate the accession to independence of the countries and peoples under colonial domination. We celebrate our faith in the principles and moral values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

As we celebrate this jubilee, we pay special tribute to the founding fathers of the United Nations. Our challenge for the next century is to strengthen the United Nations further in order to enable it to deal more efficiently and vigorously with issues related to the maintenance of international peace and security and to promote sustainable development, human rights and fundamental freedoms. Only these can ensure a better and safer world for all.

The reforms of the United Nations system are a logical consequence of the increase in the membership of the Organization and of the winds of democratization blowing across the world. The United Nations needs to update itself to meet this reality. This requires innovations, particularly in the composition and working methods of the Security Council to make it more representative and democratic, thus allowing greater participation on the part of developing countries in general, and of Africa in particular.

We are at the dawn of a new era. We have the responsibility of making it an era of peace, stability and sustainable development for humanity as a whole. Development is the twin sister of peace. There can be no sustainable development without lasting peace, nor can there be a lasting peace without sustainable development.

Development is a basic human right. Consequently, we have to adopt common policies towards people-centred development.

Those summits and conferences which we have convened over the past five years reflect our conscious and collective desire and determination to attain the most viable solutions to the problems facing humanity. It is our belief that the most important element in holding summits and conferences is the implementation of the decisions therefrom.

When looking at development as a global issue we have to bear in mind the specific conditions and needs of the developing countries and take into account the social and human dimension of development. Conditionalities of development aid and financing, particularly by the Bretton Woods institutions, must be based on this reality if we want to ensure progress in developing countries.

We in Mozambique have recently benefited from the assistance of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the international community at large in putting an end to a devastating war. We highly appreciate the role played by the United Nations in supervising and monitoring the implementation of the General Peace Agreement for Mozambique, which culminated in the holding of the first multi-party general elections, in October 1994.

Peace in Mozambique was made possible by the following fundamental factors: first, the outstanding political will demonstrated by the parties; secondly, the positive role played by all segments of society; thirdly, the spirit of tolerance and mutual accommodation; and fourthly, the significant role played by the international community. Our country considered itself to be an integral part of the United Nations operation as a Member fulfilling its obligation to work for the success of the Organization.

Our own experience in Mozambique underlines the need for the United Nations to bear in mind that peace-keeping forces operate on the basis of consent by the parties concerned. Therefore they must always act with impartiality and in accordance with their mandate. Furthermore, they must respect and abide by the principles of independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference, with due regard for each country's specificities. National institutions must be respected and protected.

With peace today we look to the future with optimism and renewed hope. The unflinching will of the Mozambican people to consolidate peace and democracy must be complemented by the creation of adequate conditions for rebuilding the socio-economic fabric severely affected by 16 years of war. As a measure of post-conflict peace-building we would like to stress the vital role of the United Nations and the international community at large in assisting countries emerging from conflict situations, particularly in supporting programmes for the rehabilitation of their economies and social infrastructures.

In conclusion, I should like on behalf of the Mozambican people and Government to express our highest appreciation of the positive role played by the United Nations in international relations during the 50 years of its existence and to reiterate our firm commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

15. The Republic of Maldives

Address by
H.E. Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President

On this historic occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, I convey to you, Mr. President, and all Member States of the United Nations sincere greetings from the people of the Maldives.

Given only five minutes to speak, one has to be brief and focus on only a few of the most crucial issues that have a direct bearing on one's own country. Therefore, what I have to say today may be at variance with what other speakers have said, or will say, on this occasion.

For the Maldives, a small island nation, our top priorities are our security, our independence and the basic needs of our people.

Fifty years ago, the United Nations was created to serve all peoples — rich and poor alike; big and small on an equal footing — based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members. My question is this: has the United Nations been successful in the even-handed application of this principle and, more particularly, has the United Nations succeeded in ensuring the protection and security of small States?

Just a few weeks ago, a band of foreign mercenaries invaded another island nation, the Comoros, and toppled its legitimate Government. I did not hear of any United Nations action. In November 1988 heavily armed foreign terrorists attacked my own country and tried to do the same. We received no assistance from the United Nations to repel the attack. Following that traumatic experience, the Maldives raised the issue of the vulnerability of small States to external threats and foreign intervention, which led to the adoption of the relevant United Nations resolutions.

We do acknowledge what the United Nations did in the Middle East in 1956 and 1967, and in Kuwait in 1991. We want the United Nations to react with the same urgency, commitment and effectiveness to the threats that we small States are frequently exposed to. The security and protection of small States must be accepted as an integral part of international security and peace.

The coming into force of the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries would contribute immensely to the strengthening of international security. Regrettably, however, though the Convention was adopted by the General Assembly in 1989, only nine Member States have so far ratified it. I therefore urge all Member States which have not done so to ratify the Convention as a matter of priority.

The latest scientific research indicates that the global temperature may increase by as much as 6° Fahrenheit by the year 2100 and that consequently the oceans may rise by as much as one metre or more during the next century. My people want to know what the United Nations will do to save the Maldives and other small island nations from being engulfed by the sea. Indeed, the small island nations are most susceptible to the dangers of environmental crises as well, especially those due to climate change and sea-level rise. Unless the industrialized countries drastically cut down the emission of greenhouse gases, with immediate effect, the small island States and other low-lying areas will face an environmental catastrophe of unprecedented proportions.

The achievements of the United Nations in the past 50 years have been many. Through its decolonization efforts, more than 100 independent nations have come into being. Apartheid has been dismantled. Human rights and good governance have acquired high priority. The rights of women have gained ascendancy worldwide. Measures relating to youth development and child welfare have become key components of national and international social programmes.

Despite these gains, the issues of the social and economic development of many countries have remained extremely critical. The evils of drug abuse and terrorism plague our lives. The unsustainable management of the world's natural resources and the rapid deterioration of the Earth's environment have become problems of global magnitude. It is imperative that the United Nations take timely action to save succeeding generations from the scourges not only of war, but of these new dangers as well.

We are about to enter a new millennium in circumstances vastly changed from those of the time when the United Nations was born. Today the world needs an Organization that will aim at a world of shared economic prosperity and national security and one in which communities can live in harmony with one another and with the environment.

The United Nations is here to stay. We owe it to the coming generations to keep the flame burning and light up humanity's path to a brighter future in a more equitable world.

16. The Republic of Honduras

Address by
H.E. Dr. Carlos Roberto Reina Idiaquez,
Constitutional President

[Delivered in Spanish]

The United Nations is completing 50 years of existence on the threshold of a new century and a new millennium, which means we have a twofold obligation: to think about both the work done by the Organization in that period and the challenges of the years ahead. Balancing the books and considering prospects are the obligatory tasks of this anniversary.

The world that emerged from the Second World War did not live up to the dreams of the victorious peoples, and it still has not done so. No sooner had the flames of combat been extinguished than that special sort of struggle known as the cold war began, dividing the planet into adversarial spheres of influence. The Organization was born between fear and hope. None the less, it was the best idea of modern times and the best option for the peace and prosperity of peoples.

The world body has continued to grow throughout these 50 long years. Today it is a great family of departments and agencies whose vast network of competences and activities covers mankind's most important focuses of concern. Its work in the field of development shows how gravely peace is affected by the separation between developed and developing countries and the persistent inequity in the distribution of wealth between the tightly knit circle of affluence and the large circle of marginalization and poverty.

The poor of the world have a right to expect this planetary forum to spectacularly light up the path to justice and well-being. At present, the way for States, particularly the poorest States, to follow that path is by making economic readjustments in order to find and perfect models selected for their correspondence with the material values of the industrialized societies. This paradigm is inadequate. No country in the world can speak of progress while the great majority of peoples suffer from hunger and thirst for justice, however different might be the abstract reality reflected by macroeconomic indicators.

We are urged to consider new propositions. But we are now searching for the human being in development, the spirit in the meshing of gears, a fellow man who stands here, now, and who cannot now or ever be represented by the gross national product or per capita income. What really matters is not the civilization of capital, but the culture that system can engender if it remembers that the tool is less important than the hand that moves it. This woman, this man and this child are the true centre of our concerns, and not a number lost in the vague dimension of surveys and averages.

The United Nations must help us find the humanism of our times. As if in a new Renaissance, we must erect a heretofore unseen concept of man on the shoulders of science and technology, a concept by which the importance of material things is found in their relationship with the higher levels of humanitarian conscience. This road begins by vanquishing poverty, defeating illegitimate power, breaking corruption and impunity and establishing a world order loved and sustained by all. There is no better definition of a future democracy.

In Central America we are working on a comprehensive agenda of development in which political, economical, social, cultural and environmental issues receive equal attention, given the multidimensional character of the human being. We started an alliance for sustained development, and we want the rest of the world to participate in order to exemplify a new understanding of the relations between the peoples of the United Nations.

My country, the Republic of Honduras, is pledged to carrying out a genuine moral revolution and a national convergence process leading to a Government by consensus. Thus, we shall enter the new century in a new way in order to bury for ever the vices and errors of the past. We are convinced that the United Nations, this alliance of the peoples of the world, will enter the second half of its first century with a renewed spirit of humanism, solidarity and full conviction that respect for the legitimate will of peoples is the sturdiest foundation for peace, that desideratum of the new United Nations.

17. The Czech Republic

Address by
H.E. Mr. Václav Havel, President

Allow me a few words about my vision of the United Nations in the twenty-first century.

I am deeply convinced that the primeval foundations of the broad spectrum of cultures, spheres of civilization and worlds of religion which we represent here contain certain basic moral principles which are identical to them all and which offer a key to human coexistence on this Earth of ours. I am convinced that we all share certain most profound experiences with ourselves, with the miracle of our very existence and with the miracle of the universe of which we are a part. If the future of mankind is not to be jeopardized by conflicting spheres of civilization and culture, we have no alternative but to shift the ray of our attention from that which separates us to that which unites us. This is where I see the only possible source of a new spirit, of a new ethos of world cooperation, as well as of humanity's renewed responsibility for the world. This, too, is where I sense the only possible spiritual basis of any future meaningful existence of the United Nations.

So far, it seems to me, the United Nations has, above all, served States and their Governments in reaching various agreements, but also in their competing interests, rivalries and prestige. In my vision, the United Nations of the future would become more clearly an instrument serving all inhabitants of our planet, an instrument for pursuing their good life together. The point is not to expropriate any part of their internal identification with their own country, their people, their religious or cultural roots. The point is to forge a world in which everyone could be himself without being menaced by another, in which we would all feel that there are values which we all share and whose protection and nurturing are in the interest of us all. The form of a twenty-first century United Nations could be shaped precisely by this spirit, by this sense of responsibility.

I have a vision of the United Nations General Assembly one day resembling a parliament of the world.

I have a vision of the United Nations Security Council assuming additional tasks. One day, it might become the focal point for the operational decision-making of this world Organization on all basic issues that concern it. Its permanent members, their composition better balanced than now, should one day include the most populous and most influential countries of the world, representing different continents and spheres of civilization, indeed even certain integrated groups of States pursuing a joint foreign policy.

I have a vision of the United Nations one day establishing a permanent strike force capable of stopping aggressors, as well as a permanent peace-keeping force, with more of a policing role.

I have a vision of the United Nations of the twenty-first century dealing only with matters that no one else can deal with, and only with matters it can really affect. For quite a few of the issues it takes on today could probably be better dealt with by other global or regional organizations. All the more effectively and flexibly would the United Nations then deal with those issues that truly do pertain to it. This is connected with another major topic: streamlining the United Nations bureaucracy. I believe that the simpler its structure and the more independent and responsible its staff, the less it would actually cost us all. And, indeed, who should pay for it? Ideally, difficult though it is to imagine today, all citizens of this planet might one day contribute, as directly as possible, some minuscule portion of their income to make it quite obvious that this is an Organization humankind established for itself rather than strictly the domain of professional diplomats serving various Governments.

These few sentences should make it clear that my vision of the United Nations in the next century is not one of a monstrous superstate, a burden to all, but on the contrary, a vision of a flexible and workmanlike instrument of service to all, infused by a common will to benefit mankind as a whole.

Let me sum up. Mine is a vision of a United Nations consisting not, as happens so frequently today, of divided nations and in particular of divided States, but of united people belonging to a world in jeopardy which can be saved only by uniting all human forces.

18. The Republic of Hungary

Address by
H.E. Dr. Árpád Göncz, President

It is an honour and privilege for me to participate in this Commemorative Meeting.

During the 50 years of its existence, the United Nations has upheld the noble ideals and values embodied in the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other important United Nations instruments. These ideals and values are even now a major driving force behind the momentous changes in our contemporary world.

We should not forget that the strengths and weaknesses or the accomplishments and failures of the Organization are our common responsibility. In this respect, the vision of the founding fathers "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" remains to be pursued vigorously for all of us.

For so many in the world, the United Nations is a beacon of hope and help. We, ourselves, felt this when, in 1956, Hungarians in our revolution and national-freedom fight, including myself, took courage from the distant but clear voice of solidarity coming from this very Hall. We remain deeply grateful for that. The continued attention of the United Nations was instrumental in the improvement of our fate, including that of the prisoners of conscience.

Small countries, like Hungary, sought and found in the United Nations a forum where they could articulate and defend their interests and act in unison with all nations. Thus they could contribute to the shaping of a better future. We have learned — maybe well before others — that by upholding universal values, supporting the ideals set forth in the Charter 50 years ago and acting for their practical implementation, we not only do not lose our specific identity but also enrich the precious political heritage of mankind.

We live in a time of opportunities, and the United Nations is at a crossroads. Only a reformed United Nations can be a catalyst in our endeavours to create a safe and secure world, where freedom, democracy and respect for human rights flourish. We should redouble our efforts to revitalize the United Nations. To this effect, there can be no delay in restructuring and streamlining the costly bureaucracy of the United Nations system. We have to rationalize the work of the General Assembly. Enlargement of the Security

Council, along with enhancement of its effectiveness, is more than necessary. Financial reform of the United Nations is a must.

The time has come for a revitalized multilateral mentality to meet effectively and firmly the challenge of the new global and interconnected threats of resurgent nationalism and ethnic strife, international terrorism, illicit drug-trafficking, the smuggling of nuclear materials, the deliberate degradation of the global environment and poverty.

By the same token, international protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms — including minority rights — sustained economic growth, sustainable development and the promotion of prosperity should be high priorities for us well into the next century.

It is in this connection that I should like to pay tribute in particular to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund and the International Atomic Energy Agency as shining examples of multilateral thinking at its best.

At this important juncture of history, our task is to develop and strengthen a genuinely world-wide constituency for the United Nations. We can do this only if we make every effort to involve the young generations, whose confidence must be won through a renewed philosophy of multilateral cooperation. I am confident that for generations to come the promotion and protection of multi-ethnicity, diversity, tolerance and respect for human dignity will be the major feature what is expected of the United Nations.

The next era of the United Nations is being shaped today by our ideas and actions. I am profoundly convinced that our common wisdom, courage and determination will make the United Nations indeed worthy of the heritage given to us by our forefathers, who laid the foundation of this truly unique Organization 50 years ago.

19. The Republic of Chile

Address by
H.E. Mr. Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, President

[Delivered in Spanish]

I am honoured to bring to the General Assembly a message from the Government and people of Chile on the occasion of this celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

The preservation of humanity requires our gratitude, and today I reflect upon all those women and men who have contributed to the development of the United Nations. I also pay homage to all the anonymous heroes — civilians and unknown solders — who gave their lives for peace and development.

To respond to global changes the United Nations has truly had to explore a vast array of fields of knowledge and to resolve myriad controversies between nations and peoples. The United Nations has strengthened international law in a wide variety of areas. It has helped to prevent the spread of wars, it has contributed to the settlement of disputes between North and South, and it has played a key role in the process of decolonization in Asia and Africa.

It has also strengthened international cooperation. It has fostered the creation of an open framework for trade, investment, the transfer of technology and environmental protection and has created an opportunity for links between nations with regard to debt and the financing of development.

The United Nations has made an extraordinary contribution to the promotion and preservation of human rights and, thereby, to the theory and practice of democracy. This universal consolidation of the creed of human rights is truly humanity's greatest contribution to the twentieth century and its most precious gift to future generations.

Is it not perhaps time to suggest new tasks for the United Nations? I pose this as a question, with the unpretentiousness of a young, emerging nation.

In the area of peace, I believe that the Organization should strengthen its capabilities in preventive diplomacy, implement a complete ban on nuclear testing — we are ready to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as we do not want continued nuclear testing, which is a danger to our countries and to people everywhere — and it should foster cooperation as a means of bolstering global peace.

In international law, the United Nations can encourage progress by ensuring regulatory refinements in areas critical to social and economic progress: technology, transportation, information, humanitarian aid, human rights and peace-keeping operations.

In the area of development and the eradication of poverty in the world, the fact that one fifth of the world's population lives in dire poverty demands an urgent response at the national and global levels. The conditions faced by women, children, vulnerable sectors of the population and migrant workers; the new problems of environmental deterioration; drug trafficking and consumption; the high rates of mortality and pandemic diseases; the different forms of social ostracism and exclusion — these things make it morally and politically imperative to establish new priorities for the agenda of the United Nations.

Up to now the United Nations has been the setting for intergovernmental agreement. It is now time to begin the long march towards the consolidation of ties between the peoples and groups of different societies. The exchange of cultural values in civil society can provide an important source of support for the elimination of apprehensions, racism and prejudice against human conditions of all types. Furthermore, contacts between people and the exchange of goods and services in certain areas of the world underpin different forms of political and economic integration spiritually and materially.

We believe that the future of the United Nations must be marked by emphasis on human development, preservation of the environment and the consolidation of peace. This will require adjustment of the process of reforming the Organization towards these objectives. Chile is fully prepared to contribute to the implementation of these worthy goals, in keeping with its tradition of democracy and solidarity.

The coming millennium should be a time for the emergence of a world which expresses its broadest diversity, with peoples living in peaceful unity and feeling at home. Will we be capable of making the world a true home for mankind? That is the noble task before us all, and it is up to us to achieve this goal in the third millennium.

20.
The Republic of Argentina

Address by
H.E. Dr. Carlos Saúl Menem, President

[Delivered in Spanish]

Fifty years have elapsed since the unspeakable pain and suffering of a terrible war gave rise to the United Nations. Today, we are celebrating much more than an anniversary. We evoke the dream, the vision, the fears and also the courage of a few men who, despite the proximity of horror, dared to imagine a space for the preservation of international peace and security, international cooperation, the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the economic and social progress of peoples. This generation — our generation — owes the founding fathers of the United Nations its deepest gratitude.

I convey the message of a people which, from the south of the Americas, has accompanied the United Nations since its earliest years. I am the bearer of a new commitment, a renewed promise from Argentina, filled with hope and free from speculation. Our participation in peace-keeping operations and observation and humanitarian-assistance missions proves that Argentines have faith in multilateralism and in our Organization.

We note with genuine satisfaction that the Organization is deeply committed to solving the major international conflicts, but also to responding to humanitarian emergencies and tirelessly promoting respect and tolerance. Almost imperceptibly, the voices which until recently foretold the decline of multilateralism are fading away. The United Nations has proven them categorically wrong by taking the lead in the creation of new patterns of international social coexistence.

These positive developments are not, however, the only aspects of the reality that we must confront. The law of violence is still imposed in more areas of the planet than we should like to admit. Hunger, helplessness and intolerance afflict many thousands, demanding solutions that are not always forthcoming. This constantly reminds us of the need to strengthen our efforts, stimulate our imagination and increase the material resources available to the Organization in order to find a response to these predicaments that should be as immediate as it is unified.

A few days ago, from this very rostrum, His Holiness Pope John Paul II rightly reaffirmed that our task consists not merely of serving by "effective mediation for the resolution of conflicts, but also by fostering ... concrete initiatives of solidarity". *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 20th meeting, p. 5)*

In this context, I have created the White Helmets Commission with the aim of mobilizing resources, by means of a volunteer system, to support the United Nations in its activities in the fields of emergency humanitarian assistance and the promotion of a gradual transition from relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development. We have made this specific contribution in the field of development because we know that the scope of the United Nations is not and cannot be restricted to the great security issues on the daily agenda of the Security Council, no matter how urgent and pressing those issues may be.

For an organization like the United Nations, half a century of existence may seem like a long time. From its inception to the present, international circumstances have changed dramatically, from the emergence of nuclear weapons through the decolonization process to the beginning and the end of the cold war. In the presence of such an evolving and dynamic reality, questions and doubts as to the functioning of the Organization and the possible reform of its institutions and machinery begin to arise. The momentum towards reform, which represents the impulse for change and progress, must in this case be managed on a realistic and practical basis so as not to alter the delicate balance achieved after such painstaking work in San Francisco 50 years ago.

Nowadays a new atmosphere prevails, conducive to the attainment of a United Nations capable of ensuring peace and active in the promotion of economic and social progress. This new scenario will also enable us to make strides in the multilateral consideration of such new threats to peace and security as international terrorism, drug trafficking and illicit arms transfers. Because of their complexity and persistence, all these threats require coordinated and global action, which is possible only through the United Nations. The opportunity is here and now and we must make the most of it. We have a simple choice to make: either we reaffirm and confirm by deed our commitment to the United Nations or we marginalize and weaken it, thereby opening the door to past scenarios which should not be re-enacted.

I can imagine a new generation gathered right here in 50 years' time, evaluating our actions. Let us begin now, through our efforts in the framework of the United Nations, to give specific answers to the questions that our children will undoubtedly raise. This is an appointment with history that we cannot and must not avoid.

21. The Republic of Tajikistan

Address by
H.E. Mr. Emomali Rakhmonov, President

[*Delivered in Russian*]

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and the half-century that has elapsed since the end of the Second World War are historically linked to each other. The fight against the forces of evil ended with a triumphant victory, having encompassed countries with no regard to their political system or ideology. We can be proud that Tajikistan's warriors and envoys were part of those national forces that fought for this victory and formed the United Nations.

Designed to help States resolve disputes in a peaceful manner, the United Nations today faces a new challenge: to make wider use of preventive diplomacy for those purposes. We believe that the peacemaking potential of the United Nations can be coupled with its cooperation with regional organizations, primarily in deterring, confining and settling armed conflicts and in countering terrorism and radical manifestations of fundamentalism of various kinds. We believe that the best prospects for defending our national interests lie in cooperation with the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other international organizations.

This is the trend that characterizes the inter-Tajik talks today, and it is within this framework that they are taking place. I am sure that our efforts to this end would be more fruitful were it not for the remaining tension in neighbouring Afghanistan. The trend towards escalation of the conflict there not only threatens our country's security, but bears the destructive impulses of a global crisis. We call upon the international community to promote the earliest return of peace to this long-suffering land. Overcoming the Afghan crisis requires not only the constructive participation of States in the region, but also effective action by the United Nations.

The problem of the economic development of young Member States is closely linked to issues of international security. We believe that the remaining discriminatory restrictions in world economy and trade, as well as the practice of conditional financial and economic assistance to countries with transitional economies clearly do not serve the purposes of achieving universal security. The development by specialized agencies and by international banking and financial organizations of a comprehensive plan supporting reforms in countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States

(CIS) during the transition period would, in our opinion, significantly expedite the integration of these States into the world economy.

The turbulent development of today's world is pushing the United Nations in the direction of reinterpreting quite a few of its concepts, objectives and tasks. In this regard, we are hopeful that the trend of recent years towards enforcement measures as part of peace-keeping operations conducted under United Nations auspices will not gain any further momentum. While advocating stronger United Nations positions in ensuring peace and stability, including in our region, we believe the requirements of security standards should be invariable.

On its fiftieth anniversary, the United Nations has every opportunity to find effective answers to questions posed by qualitative changes in the world situation. One such answer is the streamlining of the United Nations itself, taking today's realities into account. We see the strategy of partnership in the twenty-first century as one based on underlying common interests which will help build trust and extend the borders of peace and prosperity for years to come.

Five decades are a short moment from the perspective of history. And they are a moment as beautiful as the very idea of peace and cooperation that lies at the foundation of the United Nations. The festive atmosphere within these walls today should not hide the harsh reality of day-to-day life. We must properly pass the United Nations heritage to the next generation with confidence and with hope for a better future.

22. The Republic of Burundi

Address by
H.E. Mr. Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, President

[*Delivered in French*]

Today, as we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, I should like to begin by paying a well-deserved tribute to all the founders of our Organization and by commending the courage and dedication of all the Secretaries-General who have presided over the Organization. They all worked in a tumultuous world, but their actions have been able to change the face of that world, especially through decolonization, the settlement of a number of regional conflicts and the emergence of a process of democratization in various political systems. To be sure, many alarming problems remain, especially with the continuation of poverty and major displacements of population owing to crises which have caused upheaval in certain countries.

We in the region of the Great Lakes know this well. Millions of refugees there remind the world that the socio-political crisis which has stricken the region must be quickly resolved so as to avoid the total catastrophe that some have been fearing for several months now, as political, military and economic interests complicate the issue. The solution we desire cannot be expected only from the international community. We, the sons and daughters of this region, must bend our efforts and our determination, and do everything possible, to correct the heritage of the past without being confused by it.

We must build a present which is not based on revenge for the past. We should also avoid having our future compromised by selfishness and by the promotion of narrow interests. The African peoples of the Great Lakes region have a right to peace, and we, their leaders, must give it to them. There is a great deal at stake, and we cannot risk missing this opportunity.

In Burundi, we have just experienced two years of crisis since the vile assassination of the first democratically elected Head of State in our history. Since then, given a past marked by indescribable political violence, my country has become a concern not only to its neighbours in Africa but also to the entire international community. How could it be otherwise when we know that the various crises which have stricken Burundi have always posed serious security, environmental, and even social and political problems for our neighbours. All of this is the result of a great deal of social, ethnic and political interference that has marked our border populations.

Like our neighbouring countries, the international community has been afraid that Burundi might explode and meet the same fate as that which neighbouring Rwanda did in 1994. There has already been a clash of arms, but if everyone — that is, we in Burundi, our neighbours and the international community — shows the necessary determination, the danger might be averted.

To my compatriots I say "no" to the bloody rivalry which kills, rapes, destroys, ravages, pillages and sets fire. I say "no" to the denial of the rights of others for any reason. I say "no" to intolerance, and to disobedience to authority and to the public order established by consent of the people.

On the other hand, I say "yes" to mutual trust, to security for all and to a common and shared peace. I say "yes" to freedom, to respect for individual rights and to progress for all.

To achieve this, only one condition must be met: the various Burundian military and political protagonists must guarantee peace to each other and to all the people of Burundi. Once security is assured, the national debate can proceed in full serenity and lead Burundi to equip itself with new instruments of governance consistent with universally recognized democratic principles and the inherent realities of the country.

In so doing, we expect from our neighbours and from the international community the following. First, to put an end, once and for all, to the disorderly flow of arms that circulate in the subregion and serve extremists of all kinds. Secondly, to monitor and block the routes used for entry and operations by the bands, militias and armed groups that are killing, pillaging and setting fires in virtually all parts of my country. Thirdly, to locate and destroy the media that are spreading hatred and death, such as "Radio Démocratie", and to hunt down both the organizers and those behind them. And fourthly, to help Burundi in its programme of moral and physical reconstruction, especially in the legal and educational spheres and in the resettlement and reintegration of displaced persons, repatriates and refugees, together with relaunching the economic and social development of the country.

Special emphasis must be placed in the immediate future on the work of the International Commission of Inquiry, which should quickly begin its work and shed light on the circumstances in which President Melchior Ndadaye was assassinated on 21 October 1993, and on the situation that prevailed immediately after his assassination, in particular during the subsequent inter-ethnic massacres.

The United Nations cannot effectively assist our countries unless it adapts to the requirements of today's world. Peace in the world is still endangered by growing poverty, which is evidently the gravest threat to peace in the years to come. Moreover, the exclusion of a major portion of humankind from the most

influential bodies of the United Nations gives the impression of a world that is frozen in time, whereas important changes have taken place over the past 50 years. We must transform and democratize international relations as a whole. Today, the world and its citizens demand equality, fraternity and shared development.

3. The Republic of Chad

Address by
H.E. Mr. Idriss Deby, President

[Delivered in French]

The ceremony we have been attending for two days now is a special occasion, because it marks an important turning point for our Organization. Indeed, a half-century ago, immediately following the war, some 50 nations laid the foundations for a system of society turned resolutely towards freedom, peace, collective security, and economic and social well-being. Today these aspirations remain topical and deserve the support of all. Chad, for its part, solemnly reaffirms its full commitment to these noble ideals and its determination to deploy every effort for their implementation.

While it is true that the world, over the years, has seen many upheavals and often-deadly conflicts that have resulted in sometimes severe criticism of our Organization, we must acknowledge that in many cases the United Nations has achieved substantial results and has spared humanity the worst of catastrophes.

It has played a decisive role in such varied areas as decolonization, the codification of the rules of international law, and the maintenance and restoration of peace. Our Organization has also endeavoured to face the major challenges of the end of this century, among them the protection of the environment and issues pertaining to population and sustainable development. Therefore the United Nations, in our view, remains an irreplaceable instrument for solving the problems that preoccupy our world.

Despite the outstanding efforts made by our Organization, there remain causes for concern. This is true in particular for such important initiatives as international development strategies and the establishment of a new international economic order, which have gone unheeded. The same applies to the disarmament process, certain aspects of which provoke serious worries.

Conflicts continue to ravage certain parts of the world, while hunger, extreme poverty and major endemic diseases are far from being eradicated from the face of the Earth. Many dangers, such as terrorism, drug trafficking and intolerance of all kinds, are threatening the very foundations of our society.

The need to adapt the United Nations to a changing world is evident, as has been made clear by the many speakers here who have quite rightly supported a restructuring of its various bodies so that the Organization can meet the expectations of nations today. Its ever-increasing activities must be accompanied by true political will and commensurate financial support in order to make it an effective tool in the service of peace, solidarity and international cooperation.

Since December 1990, Chad has been going through a most enriching democratic process, thereby putting an end to a long and dark period of implacable dictatorship. The enjoyment of freedoms today is a tangible reality. Political parties, trade unions, syndicates, associations for the defence of human rights, the press and many other groups are carrying out their missions without hindrance and in complete independence. But apprenticeship to democracy is no easy task.

Through lack of democratic culture, some political figures in Chad have indulged without restraint in demagogy, exaggerated statements and manoeuvres of all kinds, thus creating obstacles to the normal development of our democratic process, so much so that today Chad is one of the few countries in French-speaking Africa not to have organized pluralist elections. The Government, through my voice, undertakes to shoulder its full responsibilities in order to bring the democratic process to completion.

We take this opportunity to appeal urgently, from this rostrum, to friendly countries and to all international bodies to support our efforts to provide our country with permanent democratic institutions. To be sure, a great deal has been accomplished already with their help, and for this I should like to thank them here. But the main task remains, and it is for this purpose that I ask once again for their valuable assistance. I want them to know how grateful the people of Chad will be.

In the same vein, I should like to reiterate, on behalf of the people and Government of Chad and on my own behalf, our gratitude to the United Nations for the crucial support given to our country both for its reconstruction and for the definitive settlement of the dispute over the Aozou Strip.

That support remains essential for us. Indeed, Aozou and the entire northern part of Chad continue to suffer from the consequences of war and from the existence of mines of all types, neither the quantity nor the location of which are known.

We therefore need the help and expertise of the United Nations in mine-clearing in order to rid our land of this terrible danger.

Similarly, my Government calls on the Organization to assist the countries of the Sahel to halt the proliferation of the weapons of war in that region.

Long live the United Nations; may it hand down from generation to generation its ideals of peace, justice and solidarity for the development of nations.

24. The Republic of the Niger

Address by
H.E. Mr. Mahamane Ousmane, President

[Delivered in French]

Twenty-fourth October 1945 to 24 October 1995: it has been 50 years since the United Nations was established at San Francisco and 50 years that it has been working tirelessly to build and consolidate a better world, a world of justice, peace, progress and universal harmony.

As I convey to this Assembly the warmest greetings of the people of Niger, I have the pleasure to reaffirm solemnly and forcefully Niger's unyielding allegiance to the United Nations, and its determination to continue forever to respect scrupulously the noble principles and ideals of the Charter.

As we all know, the paramount reasons for the existence of the United Nations are the maintenance of international peace and security and thus the prevention of all conflicts that could degenerate into war; the promotion and protection of human rights; the development and strengthening of international cooperation; and the struggle for the economic and social progress of mankind.

Whatever its detractors may say, and despite the many obstacles that impede its functioning, we must acknowledge that the United Nations has been at the root of striking qualitative changes on the international scene. It has been at the centre of the accession to independence of many hundreds of millions of people. In the sphere of peace-keeping, it has somehow managed to prevent the repetition of conflicts just as devastating and deadly as the war that brought it into being. It continues to be the best framework for multidirectional thought and action towards a common approach to the ills that beset mankind, including hunger, disease, ignorance, poverty and the deterioration of the environment.

We therefore offer due thanks to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and through him to all the men and women who continue to sustain the rich, noble, proud and legitimate hopes of the peoples of the United Nations. The United Nations must continue and complete its quest for universality; it must truly be a place where all the peoples of the world can meet and consolidate their efforts. Whatever qualifications or claims some among us may put forward, we must courageously acknowledge the intangible realities of the world. Only thus can we achieve universal peace.

We are pleased by the significant progress towards peace in the Middle East and in Palestine, in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in other parts of the world. These are the result in large part of steady efforts by the United Nations, and we encourage the Organization to continue so that peace may be restored forever in Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia, Liberia and everywhere else where it has been breached or where it is threatened, as in Jammu and Kashmir and in Nagorny Karabakh.

Similarly, to encourage this movement towards peace, the United Nations must continue to speak out and act throughout the world against the injustice faced by millions whose fundamental rights are very often harshly violated or totally ignored.

To remain the conscience of the international community and to be a moral force that can regulate the behaviour of all States, the United Nations must continue its work towards general and complete disarmament in order to ensure equal security for all. It must become more open and more democratic, which requires an overhaul of the Charter, *inter alia* to ensure more equitable representation of its Members in the Security Council.

Finally, and above all, the United Nations must be more vigorous and resolute in the struggle to eliminate the destitution and poverty that buffet entire regions of the world, the perpetuation of which is one of the greatest of threats to peace. In that connection, the situation in Africa, that great continent full of resources and vitality, deserves the full attention of the international community. In the light of these urgent priorities, we must lend strong support to the programme set out by the Secretary-General in "An Agenda for Peace" and in its indispensable complement "An Agenda for Development", in order to breathe new, more hopeful dynamism into the United Nations.

In my view, these are the requirements of the day. This is the generous vision of tomorrow's world that we must offer to the peoples we represent as we strive towards the ideals set out by the signatories of the San Francisco Charter.

5. The Republic of Cameroon

Address by
H.E. Mr. Paul Biya, President

[Delivered in French]

Allow me at the outset, Sir, to congratulate you on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at a time that I do not hesitate to describe as historic. Let me also convey my cordial greetings to all the dignitaries present here, and especially to the many Heads of State and Heads of Government.

May I also be permitted to express my sincere and fraternal appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for the unceasing efforts he has made in the service of our Organization.

Cameroon of course rejoices, as do all other Member States, at the opportunity to take part today in the ceremonies that mark the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. I am all the happier to be here at this great encounter, since my country was a pupil of the United Nations. My compatriots, I can affirm, have not forgotten the primary role played by the United Nations in Cameroon's accession to national and international sovereignty.

For us Africans, the United Nations is the expression of a collective will that is at the service of peace, of human dignity and solidarity among peoples. Created in the wake of one of the most harrowing conflicts in the history of mankind, in the last 50 years the United Nations has made an inestimable contribution to the defence of peace. In working for disarmament and encouraging negotiations, it has taken preventive action to ward off possible future conflicts.

And when, regrettably, weapons were used, the United Nations offered its good offices. It placed itself between the parties, and the soldiers of peace have often paid a heavy price in the cause of international security.

We must also emphasize the action undertaken by the United Nations in defence of the rights of the human person, particularly in third-world countries. In this connection, the United Nations contribution to the progressive disappearance of colonialism and the end of apartheid is well known to all.

If we are to rejoice in the opportunity of peoples to decide their own fate we must not forget that the flourishing of the human person requires first the exercise of other rights, especially the right to health and to education. The work done in this respect by the United Nations specialized agencies is irreplaceable.

Far be it from me to omit mention of the right to development, without which our achievements would be mere illusion. It is, in essence, only the other side of the coin, which is the duty of solidarity, the imperative need for which was recognized by the United Nations. All the problems of the third world — economic crisis, the debt burden, the inequality of terms of trade and so on — can be resolved only by joint action between the industrialized and developing countries.

In truth, what we are talking about is a "contract of solidarity", where each party can benefit. It would undoubtedly be appropriate to add to this duty of solidarity, which is inscribed in the texts, a "supplement of soul" or heart, which might give some hope to hundreds of millions of people. The peoples of the third world would undoubtedly see this as a key contribution to that new, fairer world order for which they yearn.

On the eve of the third millennium, to what more exalting task could the United Nations devote itself?

The Republic of Iraq

Address by
H.E. Mr. Taha M. Marouf, Vice-President

[*Delivered in Arabic*]

During the past 50 years of its life, the United Nations has achieved memorable successes. It has succeeded in eradicating colonialism, in assisting liberation movements and in laying the foundations of international law. Based upon a comprehensive concept of security, it has tried hard to strike a balance among the various components of security in the political, economic and social fields.

On the other hand, the cold war situation, whose origins coincided with the birth of the Organization, cast its shadow on the United Nations and its activities. The two super-Powers sought to adapt the working methods of the Organization in such a manner as to ensure that neither of the two would lose the elements of power to the advantage of the other. This was achieved at the expense of the principles of the Charter and the interests of the great majority of the Members of the international Organization. The era of the cold war also witnessed the eruption of many wars, the acceleration of the arms race and the regression of prospects for the achievement of the economic and social objectives of the Organization, including specifically the objective of comprehensive development, thus contributing to the widening of the gap between rich and poor nations and to the creation of new hotbeds of political instability.

With the end of the cold war, all the grandiose hopes for a new era of peace, development and democratic international relations have had to give way to an emergent unipolarism, whose five years of existence have witnessed many armed conflicts, both on the international and the domestic levels. There began attempts to dismantle States in the name of freedom of choice. In the economic field, the battle of contending interests is being fought with increasing intensity so as to secure the concentration of wealth in the hands of the dominant Powers, thus putting an end to the economic advancement of certain developing countries that have charted for themselves a balanced course of development and progress. In the social field, attempts have been made to steer the course of joint international action towards ensuring the predominance of the values and principles of a certain cultural tradition at the expense of the cultural concepts and values of other nations. The dangers that threaten the environment are still there. The question of disarmament continues to be dealt with in consonance with the priorities of the Powers that possess nuclear weapons and those that have passed the threshold of nuclear armament.

Within the United Nations, unipolarism has spawned types of behaviour characterized by selectivity, double standards and putting the mechanisms of the international Organization at the service of narrow self-interest. This has led, among many other things, to a hasty application of the measures provided for in Chapter VII of the Charter, such as sanctions and the use of armed force. Sanctions have been applied on the basis of an extreme interpretation, with the result that they have inflicted the most grievous harm on the civilian populations in the targeted countries and have deprived those people of their basic human rights including, in particular, their right to nutrition, medication, education, work and development, as was the case with Iraq, where the comprehensive sanctions imposed for over five years now have resulted in the death of thousands of children, women and the elderly due to lack of food and medication.

These negative developments should not weaken our resolve. Now that we can diagnose the ailment, we have to be quick with the remedy. We should begin by activating the democratic process in the work of the United Nations. We should seek to reinforce the United Nations mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes and promote judicial remedies for such settlements. We should reform the Security Council and its working methods in order to enable the Security Council to respond to the interests of the overwhelming majority of Member States. We should lay down such rules and principles as would preclude the use of measures set forth in Chapter VII for serving purposes that have nothing to do with the objectives of the Charter.

We should also promote the role of the United Nations in the economic sphere with a view to creating balanced international economic relations based on the principles of justice, equity and interdependence in coping with the requirements of development.

Finally, we should act with full speed in all areas concerning disarmament while seeing to it that the outcome of our endeavours will serve the interests of all rather than the interests of some.

The Republic of Yemen

Address by
H.E. Mr. Abdourabou Mansour Hadi, Vice-President

[Delivered in Arabic]

On behalf of the delegation of Yemen, allow me to express our sincere congratulations on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. I should add to those congratulations the acknowledgment of the Government and people of Yemen and my own personal appreciation for the efforts of the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his untiring work in managing the Organization's affairs and raising its standards in the service of all mankind.

It is also a source of great pleasure to me and pride that I have been given the honour of participating in this special commemorative meeting. I should like to express to you the support of the Republic of Yemen for the Secretary-General's efforts in the area of maintaining international peace and security and to underscore the importance we attach to the concepts contained in An Agenda for Peace and in the Agenda for Development.

Despite the challenges and difficulties facing the Organization as it discharges its functions and reaffirms its character, the last five decades have yielded important historic achievements. These achievements have helped us to arrive at the present stage in forming a collective future vision.

The United Nations has contributed considerable efforts to our endeavours to achieve the purposes and uphold the principles which are the very foundations of the Organization. It has scored outstanding successes on a global scale in the field of peace-keeping, security and economic and social development.

Its greatest achievement is, perhaps, that it has spared mankind the horrors of a third world war. The Organization has also contributed to the liberation of nations, the raising of mankind's standard of living and the affirmation of the human right to a free and dignified life.

Yemen found in the noble purposes of the Charter one of its worthy objectives and it became a Member on 30 September 1947. At the time, the Yemeni people were languishing under the oppressive rule of the Imams and the yoke of colonialism. The United Nations stood by our people in their struggle to gain their independence and freedom from the burden of colonialism in the southern part of the country. Similarly, the Yemeni people will never forget the great efforts made on their behalf by the United Nations with a view to mitigating the suffering they had to endure as a result of the separatist attempt, nor will we forget the humanitarian assistance given to the affected areas in Yemen. The United Nations is still contributing to the development process of our people in different fields with the aim of achieving the desired development goals within the framework of democracy, pluralism, freedom of the press and respect for human rights.

Yemen stresses the importance of reforming the United Nations which should extend to restructuring both the main bodies and principal organs in such a way as to meet the needs of Member States in line with recent international developments and to make certain that it will be able to cope with the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Yemen therefore supports the drive towards renewal, revitalization and the shedding of the negative attitudes of the past and the stumbling blocks of the present in a sustained movement to refashion international relations and make them consistent with global trends which call for democracy, development and respect for human rights.

It is time for us all to realize that concern with human development must represent a qualitative shift in the interests of the international community. The North should no longer monopolize prosperity and the South must not be left to face poverty alone. The gap between the varying standards of living must be narrowed if collective security is not to remain diminished in scope and unstable in the shadow of the luxury of the few and the misery of the majority. Since the dawn of civilization, the goal of humanity has been world peace. While many steps have been taken towards the achievement of that goal, the road ahead is still long. Social justice remains the optimum path towards that goal.

We must also stand up to the recent tendency to pursue racist policies and resort to force in pursuit of expansionist gains under the slogan of "ethnic cleansing", a practice that gives free reign to a base natural disposition to kill and destroy at a level which defies reason and flouts every moral precept.

There is no doubt that the international Organization needs reform if it is to respond effectively to the demands of a new world economy and changing world order. The United Nations is quite capable of introducing the necessary reforms. All it needs is the political will of its Member States.

Let us make the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations a fresh start so that the Organization may play a more effective role in the life of the international community. This is an opportunity which must be seized and not wasted.

28. The Republic of Peru

Address by
H.E. Dr. César Paredes Canto, Vice-President

[Delivered in Spanish]

Peru, a founder nation of our Organization joins in commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of the United Nations with a message which, as is our tradition, strongly emphasizes our country's unalterable dedication to peace.

In so doing, Peru reiterates its firm conviction that a fundamental commitment to peace must continue to be the focus of our common efforts in the framework of the United Nations because, without it, it would be impossible to attain positive and permanent results in any of the world Organization's other fields of activity.

We must therefore take an affirmative step on this solemn occasion and today renew our pledge to the letter and spirit of the Charter, reaffirming that international law is the source of universal understanding and provides the common ground for guaranteeing civilized and peaceful coexistence among the peoples and States of the world.

The United Nations has had unquestionable successes in the 50 years of its existence. Peru recognizes them and appreciates them at their full transcendent value. However, we cannot fail to stress that, during this period, we have not experienced 50 years of world peace. The conflicts that are still proliferating in many parts of the Earth mean that, at this very moment, men, women and children are falling victim to armed clashes which, far from resolving problems, aggravate them because land that is strewn with destruction and death is the most fertile ground for resentment and further sterile conflicts, even more bitter and prolonged, generating an endless spiral of violence.

Nevertheless, we are firmly convinced that the United Nations still represents the best choice for collectively maintaining peace. That will require prompt reforms, so that the universal Organization may be able to strengthen its methods of work, review its priorities, and enhance its efficiency. With regard to the membership of the Security Council, restructuring is indispensable and urgent if it is to maintain its usefulness and influence as a mechanism for preserving peace. The world which gave rise to the present structure of the Security Council no longer exists. The world order emerging from the Second World War has been overtaken by events. Accordingly, the

Council should, in order to be effective, adapt itself to the reality and challenges of the present and the future, and should include representatives of the present world order. The rapid growth in the number of independent States and the emergence of new Powers in the political and economic sphere should be taken into account in the composition of the Security Council. Peru therefore advocates expansion of the Council in order to ensure equitable participation by developing countries and it supports also the aspirations of States such as Japan and Germany to become permanent Members.

The capacity of the United Nations to respond to multiple and changing challenges will continue to be put to the test in the coming years and well into the twenty-first century. To face those new and varied challenges, we must strengthen the world Organization and give it our renewed support. The new threats to peace and security are today taking the form of deepening poverty, lack of food, deficiencies in education, technological backwardness, violence in the cities and environmental degradation. The United Nations has an active role to play to promote international cooperation and seek to remedy those problems so that conditions can be created under which the global extension of progress may soon become a reality for all the peoples of the world.

The message of peace sent by our President, Mr. Alberto Fujimori, to all the Members of this Organization and in the same spirit, I am bringing on behalf of Peru, to this solemn Commemorative Meeting carries the force and conviction of a people who, for over a decade, have lived and suffered through a wrenching history of internal violence and who have regained the fundamental right to live in harmony and look to the future with hope, to feel that they are masters of their own fate. Peru, now filled with optimism, is holding fast to the peace it has won and fervently hopes that the United Nations will make its action ever more effective so that the ideal of peace by which it was founded may extend to all the peoples of the world.

29. The Kingdom of Morocco

Address by
His Royal Highness Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed

[*Delivered in Arabic*]

Allow me to deliver this address on behalf of His Majesty. It reads as follows:

"Fifty years ago, the United Nations was created on the initiative of fifty Nations with the purpose of maintaining international peace and security. Today, membership of the Organization has reached one hundred and eighty-five States. This clearly demonstrates the perspicacity of the original founders.

"Let us therefore congratulate our Organization on its longevity and on the breadth of its purpose. Let us also congratulate ourselves on all that we have secured from its ceaseless efforts to consolidate the civilizational dimension of international cooperation.

"Without a doubt, the United Nations has contributed to the maturity humankind has achieved and to the enlightenment it has gained. This has led to the lowering of the barriers of antagonism and divergence that prevailed in international relations in the past, and to the laying of the framework for new methods of international collaboration.

"At the birth of our Organization in 1945, the expectation was that its functioning was going to be characterized by sound international cooperation. It was not long however before the world found itself in the grip of a cold war situation that developed between two blocs which competed for influence. This situation led several countries of the South during the nineteen sixties to align themselves with one or the other of the two competing blocs, and to seek international cooperation outside the framework of the United Nations within which the international community was supposed to work in understanding and harmony. As a result, the activity of the United Nations was rendered ineffectual and its work in many areas was marginalized. The specialized agencies of the United Nations, be they in education, science or culture, or in food, health or development, as well as the other agencies which were created by the United Nations to benefit mankind through non-political activities, were marginalized and their role diminished. The result was that humanity did not benefit from those agencies as it should have, whilst their specialized activities constitute the very essence, objective and purpose of the United Nations — we might even say, the very reason for its existence.

"Today, as we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization, and as we stop to take stock of its strengths and weaknesses, we must reaffirm our faith in its mission which must continue and in its principles which the Charter introduced as guidelines for international action.

"We are all aware that the Organization will not succeed in carrying out its mission unless it is provided with all the necessary means, especially the material means that would enable it to do its work.

"Therefore, if we are to remain deserving Members of this Organization, we must carefully examine its internal problems and, in consultation with each other, find the means to solve them.

"If it is truly our desire to have mankind reap the benefits of the activities of this Organization, and in particular those of the specialized agencies in the areas of health and development and education and culture, we must not waste any time in rescuing the Organization and in making it capable of addressing the issues that face mankind so that it may live up to the hopes and expectations that have been attached to it. This must be done quickly, before there appears on the international political scene another giant harbouring unipolar aspirations who would return us, God forbid, to the era of the cold war from whose consequences humanity suffered so much and from whose influence it was deeply scarred.

"On this special occasion, we would like to reaffirm before you our commitment to the principles of the United Nations, not only in our capacity as King of Morocco, but also in our capacity as President of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which consists of 54 member States and which speaks for 1.2 billion people.

"The rejection of violence and terrorism, the commitment to peaceful coexistence, religious tolerance and enlightened thought are all deeply rooted in the precepts and teachings of Islam. This is what compels us to commit ourselves, without compromise, to seeing that the principles of the Charter increasingly govern international action, principles of peace and security for all the components of human society."

30. The Republic of Mauritius

Address by
H.E. The Right Honourable Sir Anerood Jugnauth, PC, KCMG, QC,
Prime Minister

I feel deeply privileged to address this Assembly of sovereign nations on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, an Organization that has for the past half century been at the service of mankind.

On this special day, we pay homage to the founding Members who were motivated by the wish

"to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war".

To those who have striven towards these goals, to all men and women who have carried out the work of the United Nations and served its ideals, in particular those who have given their lives during their service to the United Nations, let us today express our deepest and most sincere gratitude.

Although at present the activities of the blue-helmeted peace-keepers have emerged as the most visible role associated with this world Organization, the United Nations and its family of agencies are constructively engaged in a wide spectrum of challenging tasks.

The United Nations, through its agencies, has contributed to the eradication of smallpox, immunized four fifths of the world's children against deadly diseases, provided food aid, coordinated emergency relief in the face of disasters, natural or otherwise, and helped to avert or end wars and maintain international peace and stability.

Since adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the United Nations has helped enact dozens of comprehensive agreements on political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights. The Earth Summit, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, resulted in treaties on biodiversity and climate change. With the assistance of the United Nations Population Fund, women in developing countries are better able to plan their families. The United Nations International Drug Control Programme has worked to reduce demand for illicit drugs and to suppress drug trafficking. Let us also not forget the major role played by the United Nations in bringing about the downfall of the abhorrent system of apartheid.

One of the greatest contributions of the United Nations, in the view of my delegation, is the sense of confidence and security it has created around the world by its very presence and existence. Rich or poor, big or small, literate or illiterate, regardless of colour or creed, peoples and States may knock on the door of the United Nations in the event of any attack, aggression or invasion. Although immediate solutions may not always be readily available, negotiations undertaken have generally proved to be positive. In the past 50 years the United Nations has been busy creating a world run by law rather than by force. It is at the forefront of efforts to come to grips with conflicts around the world.

My country stands resolutely committed to the principles and objectives of the United Nations. We consider it natural, therefore, that the United Nations should have the support of all international organizations working for peace worldwide, such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries or the francophone community, among others.

[*Continued in French*]

My country has the honour of presiding over the Conference of Heads of State and Government of the 47 countries that use French as a common language. At the Fifth Summit, held in Mauritius in October 1993, we decided to play a more political role on the international scene. We committed ourselves to seeking appropriate solutions to major political and economic problems and to work for peace, democracy and development within the framework of a new partnership with all the multilateral organizations, at the forefront of which is the United Nations.

[*Continued in English*]

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, which has gathered in one place the largest-ever assembly of Heads of State and Government in modern history, provides us with the unique opportunity of thinking about how we can make the Organization play a more effective and efficient role in the future.

The United Nations is at the crossroads. It has already been challenged by an unprecedented number of conflicts and humanitarian emergencies on an unprecedented scale throughout the world. It has, none the less, responded well, bearing in mind how severely under-resourced it has been. The time is not for despair but for a renewal of efforts to rekindle the original aspirations of the United Nations as an Organization committed to building a functioning world community.

For years now we have agreed that it is essential to review the functioning of the United Nations. My delegation therefore fully supports the ongoing discussions by the different working groups set up to consider ways and means of reforming and strengthening the United Nations. A reinvigorated and effective United Nations must be relevant to the aspirations of those it is meant for. It is therefore important to ensure that, whatever options we choose, they should respond to the individual and collective needs of our peoples.

In this connection, the main organ of the United Nations, the Security Council, should be made more democratic and representative through an expansion of its membership at the level of both permanent and non-permanent members. The composition of the Security Council should reflect the aspirations of the United Nations Charter as well as the present political, geographical, economic and demographic realities.

In this respect, my delegation firmly believes that India, the largest parliamentary democracy, should be entitled to a permanent seat on the Security Council, among others, as well as a representative of the small island States. Given the specificities of small island States, I submit for the consideration of this august gathering that small island States as a group, reflecting a distinctive reality, should find permanent representation on the Security Council.

Need I stress the vulnerability of small island States, whether from an environmental, economic or security point of view? I believe that what happened in Comoros recently is an ample reminder of such vulnerability. Therefore, the small island States, with their diversity and multiplicity of population, languages and cultures, deserve that their specific vision of world affairs be heard at the main organ of the United Nations.

From 51 in 1945 the membership of the United Nations has increased to 185 today. This in itself is evidence of the expression of willingness on the part of the countries of the world to come together, to unite and to work together towards a common goal which would serve the best interests of humanity.

However, in this era of spectacular expansion of access to global telecommunication technology and of a fast emerging interdependent world, it is important that we realize and converge our efforts to bridge both the economic gap and the technological gap between industrialized and developing countries.

In this respect, many of the newly independent countries of the post-war period which are Members of the United Nations require the concerted efforts and the special attention of the international community for the take-off of their economies.

The United Nations has a global mission to address felt needs, to further the common objectives of the world community and to promote the economic and social advancement of peoples in all countries, big and small, thus creating the conditions for the peaceful development of all.

Let us therefore dedicate ourselves to creating such an environment in a spirit of mutual respect and harmonious coexistence of the different cultures flourishing on the surface of our planet. Let the culture of tolerance be fixed in people's minds permanently and guide our actions through the next century.

31. Antigua and Barbuda

Address by

H.E. The Right Honourable Lester B. Bird,
Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs

I come neither to bury the United Nations nor to praise it. Today the United Nations moral authority is sorely wounded, bleeding from its wounds in Bosnia, in Rwanda and in Somalia.

Rogue regimes in these places have challenged the power of the United Nations and found an impotent force constrained by its limited operations' mandate and weakened by the paucity of its resources. The might of the world community, which should have been an overwhelming force to end conflict, stop killing and save lives, proved to be incapable of enforcing the peace that it set out to keep — hobbled essentially by its Member States.

Beyond its major task of prevention and termination of armed conflict, the United Nations also held out the prospect of economic progress for developing countries such as my own. Yet globally the poor have become poorer and the gap between the rich and poor nations has widened to a chasm.

So far in the decade of the 1990s, the United Nations has initiated five world conferences on development issues ranging from environment, through social issues and population, to the role of women. It remains to be seen whether the substance of these conferences will go any further than their form.

But if the contribution to these conferences by the powerful nations of the world is any measure of their capacity

> "to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples",

as the Charter promised they would, then I suspect that the labours of the 1990s will prove fruitless.

It is in this connection that I commend to Member States urgent consideration of the proposal contained in the report of the Commission on Global Governance for an Economic Security Council, imbued with the same standing now enjoyed by the Security Council on security matters, but with a wider, more representative membership, including smaller States, to give political leadership and promote consensus on international economic issues. If this is not done the flame of hope which the United Nations ignited in our hearts will lose even the flicker that is kept alive only by our commitment to internationalism.

Grave environmental degradation has occurred at a rapid rate over the 50 years of the life of the United Nations. The effects of global warming are already being felt brutally in countries such as mine where the destructive capacity of storms intensifies every year. If the depletion of the ozone layer and the build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere continue unabated as a result of consumption and waste by just 20 per cent of the world's people in rich nations, regions such as mine will be continuously devastated by storms, with consequential refugee problems for the States of the North.

The United Nations alerts the international community to the danger, but is powerless to act to prevent it.

Whom do we blame for this troubling state of affairs?

It cannot be the United Nations, its Secretaries-General or the thousands of United Nations soldiers and civilians scattered around the world trying desperately to preserve the prestige and authority of this body, which is supposed to represent the will and command of the world community. From the inception of the United Nations, its staff have tried to keep peace among warring forces; they have delivered humanitarian aid, supervised elections and trained police forces — all in the most trying circumstances.

The blame for the United Nations debilitation does not lie with them; it rests squarely on the shoulders of its Member States, and particularly on those States which arrogate to themselves control of United Nations activities.

We must recall that when, 50 years ago, the founders of the United Nations brought this Organization into existence, they did not create a world government, elected by and accountable to the people in whose name the Charter was proclaimed; what was constructed was an international corporation of States, with Member States as shareholders and the few permanent members in the Security Council as its Board of Directors.

In this context, the United Nations can only be as effective as its shareholders together want it to be and as its Board of Directors is mandated to direct it. The problem has been that in large measure its shareholders have not together made the Organization effective, and its directors have too often acted to advance their individual interests rather than the Charter obligations which all Member States are pledged to uphold.

If the United Nations were a multinational company, it would have collapsed long ago. Starved of equity financing by its shareholders, unable to deliver the goods it claims to produce, stalemated at the level of its Board of Directors on decisions vital to its survival, it would have been put into receivership or liquidation and a public inquiry would have been held into the conduct of its operations. Somebody or bodies would have had to pay — or pay up.

In this connection, I might mention that my own country, small though it is and lacking in resources, has paid its contributions in full, including its peace-keeping assessments, and one quarter of my country's defence force is serving in Haiti in the United Nations peace-keeping mission there.

No organization which has reached the age of 50 can be without the need for reform. But we would make a sad mistake if we focused such reform on the Organization alone and neglected the role of States in reducing its effectiveness. The two must be done together, or we would have treated only the symptoms of debilitation; we would not have tackled its causes.

There is no shortage of recommendations for reform of the Organization: we have listened to them for two days. In the short time allowed to me, I will not attempt to set out my own views on reforms. Suffice it for me to say that the world of 1995 is vastly different from that of 1945. Technological change, population growth, environmental vandalism, drug trafficking, rising poverty and the spread of disease have all conjoined globally to place pressures upon States that not even the most powerful can withstand alone. The need for an organized international response to the problems confronting mankind has become greater, not smaller.

With all its imperfections, the United Nations remains mankind's best hope for solving together the problems that jointly beset the world community.

Let us reform the United Nations, by all means. Let us cut waste and improve efficiency, but, in doing so, let us ensure that the decisions and operations of the Organization effectively express the desires of the international community as a whole, and not just the will of a privileged few. Let us resolve to improve the capacity of the United Nations by giving it the resources, functions and coordinating powers that are essential to its tasks.

In the words of Brian Urquhart, a distinguished former servant of the United Nations, mankind has

> "created unprecedented possibilities for both progress and disaster on our planet without yet assuming the collective responsibility that both these possibilities demand".

After 50 years it is time for States to assume that responsibility and, in doing so, to reconstruct a vision of nations united in the pursuit of a world of peace, equity and justice.

32. The Republic of Iceland

Address by

H.E. Mr. David Oddsson, Prime Minister

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is an occasion to reaffirm our commitment to this indispensable Organization and its ideals. The anniversary also provides Member States with an opportunity to take stock of the Organization's shortcomings and openly discuss how to overcome them.

The many important achievements of the United Nations have sustained, and can enhance, the status of the Organization. Furthermore, almost universal membership and combined resources provide the Organization with a unique potential for global action.

Smaller States, including Iceland, equate multilateral cooperation with the maintenance of security in the widest sense. Ultimately, in the current international system, all the countries of the world are increasingly affected by the same difficulties and challenges, and they basically have the same needs and aspirations. No single country, however powerful, can disregard global interdependence or turn a blind eye to problems of global significance.

To ensure that the United Nations lives up to its full potential, the process of adapting it to a changing global agenda must be brought to a successful conclusion. Necessary reforms need to be agreed upon and implemented without delay. The composition of the Security Council should reflect new realities, through a greater number of both permanent and non-permanent members. The General Assembly should become more focused on relevance and efficiency.

The inherent link between peace and development is obvious. Sustainable development, already an established concept, must become the basis of urgent action. The United Nations is the only available and conceivable venue for concerted action on a global scale. It is the only Organization capable of coordinating a reaction to the disintegration of States and humanitarian disasters worldwide and for attaining consensus on environmental protection and the management of natural resources.

Similarly, the United Nations is in a unique position, in cooperation with regional organizations, to initiate and conduct peace-keeping operations, monitor the implementation of elections and agreements on human rights and carry out humanitarian interventions. This capability must be enhanced, with a particular emphasis on early warning and rapid deployment. At the same time, the United Nations must not lose sight of maintaining peace for the long term by assisting in the reconstruction of societies ravaged by war.

There is a correlation between democracy and respect for human rights, on the one hand, and international peace and stability, on the other. Unfortunately, many Member States of the United Nations do not honour their commitments pertaining to human rights and democracy, which they voluntarily undertook by signing the United Nations Charter and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, and this is rightly of concern to the international community. Human rights are universal, and their violation cannot be excused by reference to economic, social, religious or cultural circumstances.

On the eve of the twenty-first century, when mankind faces many new and difficult challenges, it is deplorable that the functioning and strengthening of the United Nations is being impeded by a financial crisis arising from the late payment or non-payment of assessed contributions to the Organization. Member States should pay their contributions in full, on time and without conditions, as they are obligated to do under the Charter. The payment of arrears should not be made dependent on reforms of the United Nations. Moreover, reforms become impossible if the Organization is financially crippled. There is general support among Member States for reforms; they are being considered and must be implemented.

The United Nations has achieved important results and continues to hold promise. This Special Commemorative Meeting in New York should reinvigorate the Organization and chart a course for the future. Let this be the legacy of these three days in New York.

33. The Kingdom of Sweden

Address by
H.E. Mr. Ingvar Carlsson, Prime Minister

Reform is a popular word these days. "The United Nations has to be reformed" is a phrase that almost every speaker at this rostrum has used during this Meeting. But it seems quite clear that the word reform has different meanings for different speakers.

The Swedish Government is seeking reform in the governance and financing of the multilateral system — radical reform, in fact — but we will never allow reform to become a cover for cut-downs and cop-outs.

Earlier this year, I wrote to 15 of my colleagues in different parts of the world. I invited them to participate in an effort reflecting the concern of a number of political leaders who strongly believe in multilateralism, in global solutions and in the United Nations.

We met yesterday to discuss the present situation of the United Nations system and we adopted a statement in support of global cooperation to promote common security and to improve the management of economic interdependencies. This statement is an earnest, strong commitment to work for a United Nations that can help us meet the new global challenges. The 16 of us have agreed to continue to keep in touch and to be prepared to offer our continued strong political support for a more vital United Nations, adapted also to the next century.

The necessary changes will not come about by themselves. There is a need for a mechanism, a process — a process which will allow for a thorough discussion of all the constructive ideas and proposals that have come up, within and outside of the United Nations.

The Commission on Global Governance, which I chair together with Sir Shridath Ramphal, has proposed a World Conference on Governance in 1998. Such a conference would offer an opportunity to discuss and decide, in a comprehensive manner, a number of the most important issues: measures to safeguard the security of people, steps to handle economic interdependencies, ways to strengthen the United Nations machinery and ways to promote respect for international law.

Nowhere is the crisis in multilateralism more apparent than in the unwillingness of some Member States to contribute. They want more and more from our common Organization, yet, these countries are not willing to pay their membership fees. That is simply not acceptable.

We live in a world where more and more services need to be provided globally, in our truly common interest. We must develop systems of financing that ensure adequate, predictable and sustainable levels of funding. The mandatory contributions should continue to be the backbone of the financing of the core activities, but the dependency of one large contributor must be reduced. However, this may not be enough. I believe that the time has come to seriously discuss alternative methods of getting the necessary resources to the United Nations system. We need to explore the possibility of creating an international tax on foreign currency transactions. We need to consider the possibility of introducing charges for the use of common global resources such as the sea-lanes for ships or the ocean fishing areas, or an extra tax on airline tickets.

While these options are being explored, we must uphold the strictest respect for the financial commitments we all have made when accepting the Charter of the United Nations. It is a shame that so many Member States do not pay when they owe this to the Organization. The United Nations cannot be more than what its Members allow it to be.

At a time when the work of the United Nations is more important than ever, it is particularly urgent that all Members pay their contributions in full and on time. I confirm the commitment of the Government of Sweden to do exactly that.

34. The Republic of Senegal

Address by
H.E. Mr. Habib Thiam, Prime Minister

[*Delivered in French*]

Our presence at this "high place", on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Abdou Diouf, President of the Republic of Senegal, in an expression of the homage the people of Senegal to the founding fathers of our Organization, and of their tribute to the successive Secretaries-General, to you, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and to their staff who have served the United Nations, sometimes even sacrificing their lives.

Our presence also bears witness to our renewed adherence to the ideals of the United Nations and it attests to our faith in, and commitment to, the Organization's unique mission of peace and cooperation, solidarity and progress. The world has changed and that is in keeping with the interminable but ever renewed struggle for freedom.

The world economy has deteriorated, going from one crisis to another, to the detriment of developing countries. Human rights have assumed a more important meaning, a broader and more universal one.

International peace and security, economic and social development, humanitarian aid and promotion of the rule of law continue to be permanent objectives which the United Nations has always been striving to achieve in the constant struggle for freedom. Indeed, the United Nations has not only persisted in this far-reaching enterprise, it has also inspired a great number of major positive transformations with a view to finding solutions to the problems facing our human race.

But, even so, the appreciation of the Organization's work is often tainted with criticism which is sometimes justified but often unfounded. It is because the strength of the United Nations is only a reflection of our own strengths while its weaknesses or shortcomings are only our own. We should, therefore, make allowances. The United Nations exists and can only act in conformity with the collective political will of our various States and with the help of the means we put at its disposal.

The obstacles, or even the failures recorded so far — for instance in the promotion of truly peaceful relations in conflict zones such as the Middle East, in the peace-keeping operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the humanitarian aid to refugees and displaced persons from Rwanda and Burundi, in the quest for general and total disarmament, in improving people's living standards, in creating conditions for progress and development, in the fight against poverty and exclusion, in protection of the environment, in the promotion and protection of human rights, in the completion of the decolonization process, the fight against illicit drug trafficking and terrorism, in the progressive development of international law — these are mere reflections of the contradictory attitudes and interests of our various States or even those of numerous pressure groups.

Hence, it is important for our Governments to take joint action within the United Nations framework to fight against intolerance, hatred and oppression, wherever they exist. And since peace is indivisible, such an effort should be geared towards transforming all the regions of the world and should cover all fields of human endeavour. Such is the credo of President Abdou Diouf and the people of Senegal and that is why they have always responded positively to appeals for freedom, for instance, in the course of the Gulf War, in Liberia, Rwanda, in the former Yugoslavia, in Cambodia, in Lebanon and in Shaba.

However, peace implies also eliminating the acts of injustice and the inertia that continue to characterize international economic relations. In this respect, the replenishment of the funds for the World Bank's International Development Association seems to us to be an urgent task for the rich nations. Such action goes hand in hand with the need to reduce appreciably, or even cancel, the debts of developing countries, in addition to finding a solution to the deteriorating terms of trade between the North and the South. This is still an aspect of the struggle for freedom.

Now that the ideological confrontations have ended, new ideas are emerging to emphasize the need to go beyond the traditional alliances and establish larger groups. In Senegal, with President Abdou Diouf, we subscribe to these ideas, which should be supported by everyone because we have a common destiny.

This new era of peace and freedom, implies the definitive disappearance of the long-outdated cleavages that helped impede the international community's progress towards the fundamental goal of human solidarity. Above all, it calls for great generosity. Are generosity, warmheartedness, development, peace and freedom incompatible? I do not think so.

35. The Republic of Vanuatu

Address by
H.E. The Honourable Maxime Carlot Korman,
Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs

[Delivered in French]

It is both an honour and a privilege for me to address the General Assembly and participate in this Special Meeting commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

I should like, on behalf of the people of Vanuatu, to congratulate Mr. Freitas do Amaral of Portugal on his election as President of the General Assembly at its fiftieth session.

As the Head of an Oceanian Government, I applaud the admission of the Republic of Palau to the Organization as its 185th Member.

At a time when we are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and, in particular, the development programmes adopted and applied for the benefit of Member States, and the means established to guarantee international peace and security, it is our duty to do more to help the Organization face the new challenges of the twenty-first century.

The Republic of Vanuatu congratulates the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and assures him of its support for the initiatives for reform recently undertaken to meet the needs of Member States, particularly in the fields of the sustainable development of island States, protection of the environment, social development and the role of women. These initiatives must now be taken up in other United Nations bodies.

The Security Council must be expanded to include other permanent members and to guarantee adequate representation of the countries of the South, particularly small States. Similarly, the other major organs, institutions and specialized agencies of the United Nations must be the subject of review in the light of the needs of the international community of tomorrow.

In the same spirit of reform, the nations of the Pacific feel that it is necessary today to review current regional bodies in the light of the development priorities that they have set, taking account of developments in the international economic, social and political environment — in particular, within the United Nations system.

The Republic of Vanuatu, concerned about the social and economic future of the island communities of Oceania, takes the opportunity of this Special Commemorative Meeting to appeal to the United Nations and all Member States to focus more attention on the needs of our region. While many works and speeches recognize the Pacific as being the centre of the world in the twenty-first century, the nations and peoples that make it up have only a symbolic rate of economic growth, representing barely a fraction of the rate of growth of most Asian countries.

The political situation in the Pacific may seem complex because some entities are Territories dependent on their respective Trusteeship authorities. However, the peoples of these island entities, whether or not they are independent, face similar problems. They share the same Pacific Ocean, which represents a quarter of the exclusive economic zones of the planet's oceans. Consequently, the concept of sustainable development and the maintenance of long-term regional peace and security for all the countries and territories of the Pacific region are today indispensable. Limiting United Nations consideration of needs and priorities to States Members of this Organization would be definite carelessness on the part of the international community. We recognize that it is necessary to establish a constructive dialogue with the Governments of the regional territories, and I call for their understanding.

The peoples and Governments of Oceania need more active participation by the United Nations in the initiatives they undertake in the context of appropriate sustainable development and regional peace and security. The plan for a regional support unit adopted by the South Pacific Forum in Madang is an example worth considering.

Our Asian Pacific region is passing through a delicate period. The threat to the environment and to peoples posed by nuclear testing, plans for the storage of nuclear and chemical wastes, the transporting of the nuclear wastes of various countries, and the spread of radioactivity as a result of testing with no thought for environmental safety are today a question of international importance. This lack of respect for the Pacific can and might be the beginning of a disaster, not only for us in Oceania but also for international security and the environment of coastal States.

The Republic of Vanuatu congratulates France, not only for limiting testing but also for taking measures to protect the environment and for its commitment to the denuclearization of the Pacific and the world. Furthermore, the Republic of Vanuatu welcomes the recent announcement by France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America of their joint decision to sign the Protocols to the Treaty making the South Pacific a nuclear-free zone.

Once again, by focusing special attention on the needs and problems of these island nations the United Nations will be contributing to the region's efforts to restructure existing bodies, enabling them to respond better to the expectations of the island populations.

Let us respect peoples and guarantee life in the regions of our world. Let us effectively protect the environment in our respective regions. In a word, let us, together, build a more pacific world.

36. The Principality of Andorra

Address by
H.E. Mr. Marc Forné Molné, Prime Minister

[Delivered in Catalan; English text provided by the delegation]

On this special day and in this illustrious forum, it is my task as Head of Government of the Principality of Andorra to convey to the General Assembly the hopes of the people of Andorra for an ever stronger and ever more effective United Nations and, at the dawn of the third millennium, our yearning for a more just and prosperous world that can satisfy the noble aspiration of our great human family to peace and development.

In the face of the ever-present examples of lack of tolerance and solidarity, it might seem that to speak of the "human family" is to speak of a desire rather than of a reality. Making the facts accord with the words spoken in this forum depends to a very large extent on us.

Today, with five years to go before the year 2000, communications and information have become global, and economic and political relations between peoples transcend frontiers in a way that was unforeseeable at the beginning of this century, now drawing to a close. The women and men everywhere can feel that they are citizens of the world, over and above their links to their village, city, nation or State.

At the beginning of this century, we began to understand that the world was getting smaller, particularly following the World Wars, a bad example which did however serve to stimulate the nobler initiatives of mankind. The creation of the United Nations, based on the universal values of tolerance and peace, overturned the old world-view, and from global war we moved on to collective solidarity and the challenges of development.

Since then, not everything has been well done. The world continues to be imperfect and to be plagued by conflict and misery. Even as we speak in this temple of peaceful coexistence, fighting is under way in many places; children are continuing to die; yet more widows are weeping over their husbands; yet more parents are losing their children.

It is not easy to continue to speak of good intentions but we must do it. We must insist on the values that can allow mankind to survive: respect for human rights, the fundamental importance of the individual, the conservation of our natural and historical heritages.

We shall have to use preventive diplomacy more often and we shall also have to reform certain aspects of the structure of the United Nations, including the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, and the Organization's financial capacity and administrative structure.

Yet we must not tamper with the founding principles of this Organization. We must zealously preserve the principle of equality between States; it is the source of tolerance between great and small, the key to a balanced dialogue between the great and the small communities. Undoubtedly, the great States can take correct decisions that will affect us all. But they can also make overwhelming errors in direct proportion to their very size and with multiple side-effects.

Small States such as Andorra must continue to be the ones to steer the great towards dialogue and see to it that unambiguous words and open hands, which are the tools of peace, are used more often, and that the tools of war are laid aside.

Because of the demands of our histories, small communities can give us lessons in peaceful coexistence, cordial understanding, respect and tolerance. The cultural diversity of human communities obligates us, in a global world, to a dialogue among equals; this is the heart, motor and soul of the respect for others which is an essential value for peace and development.

My small country, the State of Andorra, is the historical result of an arbitration that took place in the thirteenth century and has allowed Andorrans to keep and confirm their identity at all times throughout the most turbulent centuries of old Europe. The Catalan writer Salvador Espriu called Andorra "this prodigy, almost a miracle". Bound by the heritage of our ancestors, I can guarantee that Andorra, as hitherto, will spare no effort to share with other States its history of 700 years of peace and tolerance as well as all we have learned from being a land of refuge. Our experience is similar to that of many other small States and one which the big States should understand and value.

We celebrate joyfully the establishment of the United Nations and wish it well on its first half-century of existence. Today, we all pledge to help it advance, as a standard of equality among men and women and peoples, an advocate of tolerance, an instrument for promoting peace, for defending our natural heritage and for development. Many happy returns, United Nations!

37. The Republic of Singapore

Address by
H.E. Mr. Goh Chok Tong, Prime Minister

We congratulate Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral on his election to preside over this historic fiftieth session of the General Assembly. I would also like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his leadership of and dedication to the Organization. Let me assure both of them of my delegation's full support.

The United Nations has been criticized, even maligned. Some of the criticisms are valid, but many of them are unfair. Let us not forget that the United Nations has contributed to a better world, despite its shortcomings and failures in several areas.

Globalization will be the major driving force in the next 50 years. Advances in telecommunications and technology, new ideas, global concerns over the environment and security, multinational joint ventures in business and the economic reforms and outward orientation of more and more countries will push nations to work together rather than against each other.

Regional groupings and multilateral bodies are becoming increasingly important. New institutions and forums, such as the North American Free Trade Agreement, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Council, the Regional Forum of the Association of South-East Asian Nations and the proposed Asia-Europe meeting, are being created. Existing institutions, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and such new ones as the World Trade Organization are also adapting to the changing environment.

The United Nations may not necessarily be the prime mover in many world events, given the increasing strength of these regional and multilateral bodies. But it has a very important integrative function: that of maintaining global coherence and ensuring that no country is excluded in the march towards security, peace and prosperity.

Globalization will change the way we look at sovereign authority. Those cities and areas within larger nation-States that can go global and link up with others outside their national boundaries will flourish as an integral part of a larger region. Those that stay local will lag behind. It is here that the United Nations can make a big contribution by helping sovereign States to integrate as parts of a larger economic entity and world community.

To meet these challenges, the United Nations must streamline and rationalize itself. Financial reform is a critical area. The United Nations cannot flounder from financial crisis to financial crisis. But no financial reform, however worthy and efficient, will be politically acceptable if the fundamental principle that Member States must pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions is compromised. Assessed contributions are binding legal obligations. They are not to be lightly discarded when inconvenient. To flout them unilaterally goes against the very grain of the United Nations ideal.

Security Council reform is another key area. There is as yet no consensus on which or how many or what kind of new members there should be, or on what terms. We believe that the most practical means of achieving consensus on the reform of the Security Council is to identify objective general criteria that all permanent members, present or aspiring, must fulfil. This rational approach of setting a common standard of responsibilities as well as privileges will better stand the test of time. If we can agree on this, consensus on specific countries will naturally emerge.

Singapore will continue to be deeply committed to the United Nations. The United Nations is not perfect, but it is the best institution akin to a world government that we have. Small countries like Singapore need the United Nations, and must play a constructive role in supporting it. We take the United Nations seriously, and will actively help build consensus and facilitate agreement.

The United Nations alone cannot make a better world. It must be backed by the political will and the constructive contribution of its Members. The United Nations will become stronger and more relevant if Member States support it with clear, realistic and practical long-term goals. There is no greater hope for a better world than an effective United Nations whose Members are committed to bringing this about.

38. The Republic of India

Address by
H.E. Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, Prime Minister

Half a century ago today, world leaders gathered together to create an institution of the peoples of the world to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. That was a momentous event in human history. Today, in commemorating that event, we look back and find that the successes of the United Nations have been many. Critics tend to concentrate upon failures, but on an objective appraisal the United Nations remains humankind's beacon of hope. The combined United Nations family has made commendable efforts for the overall well-being of mankind.

If the relevance of the United Nations is to continue, we will now need to address the root causes of what afflicts humankind. Looking into the causes even casually, nuclear weapons still loom large, nowhere near abolition. Poverty and underdevelopment are pervasive in many continents. International terrorism haunts the innocent. Harmony in pluralistic societies, whose number is the largest, is being disrupted by increasing fundamentalist trends based on exclusivism and intolerance, and in many cases hatred.

For several decades the spell of the cold war gripped the global community almost completely. The cold war brought a dual approach to every department of human life — politics, economics, war, peace, societal questions, art, literature: everything. The public and the private, the individual and the collective, the orthodox and the liberal, the status quo and the pro-change — all these dualities have to be resolved, not in theory, but in reality, to bring happiness to man and also to suit individual conditions. While no system can work without a philosophical underpinning, the present juncture provides new opportunities to address problems without the morbid preoccupations of the earlier confrontation.

The task of statesmanship has always been to sift the permanent from the ephemeral. An emphasis on commonality is therefore of the essence in the world of tomorrow which, paradoxically, tends to shrink in terms of physical distance, but threatens at any moment to fall apart in many other respects.

There can be no security for anyone in a world bristling with nuclear weapons. Deterrence is a false belief. I would make a fervent appeal to this Assembly to take credible steps for the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons within a stipulated time-frame. India's Action Plan, presented in

1988 in this regard, could serve as an appropriate starting-point. India looks upon it essentially as a proposal inspired by Gandhian principles and is fully committed to it.

The world's great danger today is the spread of terrorism. When sponsored and supported by States, terrorism becomes another means of waging war. The international community must therefore resolve to combat this menace, since it threatens the very basis of peaceful societies.

The realities today are trans-ideological. The crying need of a vast majority of nations is all-round development. This has to be Priority One for a long time. We need a vision of global harmony and cooperation, transcending many atavistic tendencies. Here, the message of Mahatma Gandhi, the apostle of peace and non-violence, could lead the world to a safe haven in the coming millennium.

The United Nations today includes a much larger number of independent, sovereign States than when it began. In such a context, the United Nations cannot afford to be seen as either exclusivist or incomplete, either in appearance or in outlook. In particular, an adequate presence of developing countries is needed on the Security Council on the basis of objective criteria: nations of the world must feel that their stakes in global peace and prosperity are factored into United Nations decision-making.

At the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we thus have the task of making the United Nations truly and effectively the global repository of humankind's aspirations. Right-thinking nations and peoples working together have in the past achieved miracles. I am confident that they can do so again. India will be proud and happy to be part of such an endeavour.

I have deliberately kept bilateral matters out of this short intervention.

39. Denmark

Address by
H.E. Mr. Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, Prime Minister

The creation of the United Nations gave birth to hope. Although the dreams of the founding fathers have not been fully realized, we remain committed to a strong partnership striving for freedom, peace and development. No lasting answers are found in isolationism or nationalism. We share fears and hopes. We have a common agenda and common responsibility.

We dedicate this anniversary to the thousands of people who have put their lives at risk for the ideals of the United Nations.

The new opportunities provided by the end of the cold war must be used to implement a soft security policy. We need to decide on a serious and active follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development. This will be a decisive part of the United Nations agenda in the twenty-first century. We need a new strategy. Peace and security are more than military concepts. Soft security policy measures, such as poverty alleviation, sustainable economic and social development, protection of the environment and promotion of human and equal rights, are as important as peace-keeping operations.

Experience has taught us that prevention is better than cure. In times of crisis, speed is of the essence. The ability to act quickly is often what separates failure from success. The United Nations needs a swifter, more credible response to crisis.

That is why my country, Denmark, has proposed that the existing United Nations stand-by forces arrangement be augmented by a multilateral brigade at a state of high readiness. This would greatly improve the ability of the United Nations to act. If an effective stand-by arrangement had been in place, we might have been spared many, many of the conflicts we are now facing. Sparks are easier to put out than fires. Denmark plans to earmark our contribution to the current stand-by forces for such an arrangement. We urge other nations to do likewise.

We, the political leaders, are responsible for pointing the way for the United Nations. We set the agenda. We decide the priorities. The problems of the United Nations are our problems and our responsibility. Yes, reform and rationalization are needed. So is the will to provide the Organization with political support and financial resources.

The United Nations is exactly as strong as we make it. If the Organization does not fulfil our expectations, our credibility — I repeat, our credibility — is at stake. Instead of criticizing the United Nations for not doing enough, we should take a close look at ourselves to see if we are doing enough for the United Nations.

Let us be frank: the current financial crisis threatens to undermine what has been built up over the past 50 years. It is an illusion that an Organization deprived of financial resources should be more susceptible to reform. Securing peace and development costs money. But the expense of doing nothing will be far greater. It is highly regrettable that development assistance from the richest part of the world, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, has dropped to its lowest level in 20 years. The United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product must be met as soon as possible.

The United Nations is larger than it was 50 years ago, but the world is smaller. The challenges of the next century are before us. We are dependent on each other. We have a shared responsibility. The world needs the United Nations more than ever.

40. The Kingdom of Cambodia

Address by
His Royal Highness Prince Sdech Krom Luong Norodom Ranariddh,
First Prime Minister

[*Delivered in French*]

The Royal delegation of Cambodia, which I have the honour to head, is doubly pleased to participate in this fiftieth anniversary of the creation of the prestigious United Nations.

First, this fiftieth anniversary is an opportunity for us to reaffirm our support for the ideals of the United Nations and its constant efforts to ensure peace and development. The Kingdom of Cambodia will support all efforts to democratize our Organization. It would also like to see the admission to the Security Council of new permanent members, such as Germany, Japan and some large States of the South.

Secondly, this year marks also the fortieth anniversary of the admission of Cambodia as a Member of our Organization.

The conflict in Cambodia has ended. The suffering and upheavals of our people lasted for many years. The victory of our people, over itself and over external forces, and the success of the United Nations are the result of a very close collaboration. The positive outcome of the peace process in Cambodia can be seen as an example of a successful United Nations peace-keeping operation.

The Kingdom of Cambodia is pleased today to be able to contribute to reducing tensions and even conflicts in the region of Asia and the Pacific. In becoming reintegrated into the international community, the Kingdom of Cambodia is determined to promote peace, stability and prosperity within that region and in the world.

In that respect, my delegation fully supports the plan of action, presented by President Bill Clinton from this rostrum, to combat terrorism, drug cartels and organized crime, and to reduce the numbers of weapons of mass destruction.

It is true that Cambodia and the Cambodian people have had the historical good fortune of the presence of His Majesty King Norodom Sihanouk Varman. The sole concern of our illustrious sovereign even to save his people and his country. Inflexible on essential matters, His Majesty the King guided his people along the dreadful path from martyrdom to peace. In this spirit, it is my great honour and privilege to read out the following message that His

Majesty the King has addressed to His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General of the United Nations:

[*Continued in English*]

"Your Excellency, on the auspicious occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, I should like, on behalf of the people of Cambodia, to extend to Your Excellency and the staff of the United Nations Organization our warmest congratulations.

"Fifty years ago, the end of the Second World War led to the founding of the United Nations in San Francisco. Since its inception, our Organization has played an important role in helping to solve conflicts caused by the period known as the cold war, when the then-super-Powers were constantly challenging each other, bringing the world to the brink of war. The United Nations also played a critical role, often under very difficult circumstances, in defusing regional conflicts around the world.

"The contribution of the United Nations to world peace has been unique. Through its specialist bodies such as UNICEF, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and others, the United Nations has provided both emergency assistance to people around the world in urgent need and development assistance to help raise the standard of living of millions of people. We salute the staff of these United Nations Organizations and thank them for their noble endeavours.

"We Cambodians are particularly indebted to the United Nations for helping our country and people to regain their freedom and independence. We recall with profound gratitude the noble efforts of His Excellency Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, Your Excellency's immediate predecessor, and of Their Excellencies Raffeuddin Ahmed and Yasushi Akashi, two of Your Excellency's close collaborators. Cambodians will never forget the assistance provided to our country by the United Nations.

"I very much regret that poor health prevents me from joining Your Excellency and other Heads of State at the celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, but I shall be with you all in spirit."

41. The Republic of Fiji

Address by
H.E. The Honourable Major General Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka,
Prime Minister

My country joins other Member States in celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. We salute its achievements and acknowledge its vital role in the promotion of international peace, security and cooperation.

As a forum for dialogue and reconciliation, it has contributed immensely towards the avoidance of a global war for the longest time in modern history. While it may not have fulfilled all the promises that the Charter holds, its utility and institutional durability are firmly established.

We pay tribute to the founding fathers for their vision and for the ideals that they set for us. In Fiji we share the norms and values reflected in the Charter. Hence, 25 years ago, on attaining independence, one of the first acts of my country was to become a Member of this Organization. Then, my country pledged its support for the Charter and the purposes and principles enshrined in it. I reaffirm that pledge.

Over the years, the United Nations has shown resilience in accepting new Members, in appreciating changes within States and in resolving unexpected complexities in relations between States.

Today, as we celebrate its successes, we do so expecting that new realities will be grasped with appropriate positive responses. For instance, we are witnessing the economic resurgence of Asia and the rapidly diversifying international role of Asian nations. This must be reflected accordingly in the decision-making structures of the United Nations. My country considers important the unification of Korea and the rectification of anomalies in the relationship between the People's Republic of China and Taiwan.

I commend the United Nations for its concern for small States. In the South Pacific, we have many small States, limited in resources, with constraints on our earning capacity. We are linked to the international community. Its stresses and downturns especially affect us. We remain anxious over the consequences of global warming. Our fragile South Pacific environment needs protection from all destructive acts, whether they be from nuclear tests and weapons or excessive economic exploitation. In this regard, we are happy to note the undertaking given by President Chirac yesterday from this rostrum that France will sign the Protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga next year. But this undertaking, sadly, is not enough. We and the peoples of the Pacific pray that France will cease its nuclear testing in the region immediately. We also remain committed to gender equality, in harmony with local values and traditions. As we look ahead, I wish to remind fellow Members of the necessity to implement programmes for the sustainable development of small States. The United Nations must also find ways of utilizing the skills and talent of the increasing number of qualified and experienced nationals of these States.

On this auspicious occasion, I welcome the conclusion of the draft declaration by the United Nations Working Group on the rights of indigenous peoples. The action was most appropriate, even if belated. We look forward to its early adoption. Not all the wrongs that history has wrought upon indigenous peoples can now be put right. There are, none the less, significant where redress is possible; the United Nations should not hesitate to ensure for these that remedy is expeditious.

The norms of the powerful have in the past been imposed to disinherit indigenous people, and to this day in some places, to deny them the political self-determination essential for their social and economic advancement. The United Nations must guarantee that external values and forces do not continue to coerce political concessions, economic reforms and social changes not desired by indigenous peoples themselves.

We have contributed to the best of our capacity to the multifaceted activities of the United Nations, including peace-keeping in troubled areas and to the development of the Law of the Sea. We shall continue to contribute to its efforts for peace and security as a participating Member in the community of nations. We remain confident that this Organization will remain true to its ideals; hence I reaffirm my own and my country's commitment to it.

I wish the United Nations Organization well as it sails into its next half century.

42. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Address by
H.E. The Right Honourable Sir James Fitz-Allen Mitchell, KCMG,
Prime Minister

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was made flesh.

In the passage of history, ideas are translated or transformed into substance. Over the passage of time, men with vision conceive an idea, create an institution, and one that benefits mankind for all time. Our United Nations belongs to this noble category, of which there are few that have earned 50 years' respect.

But this does not mean that the structure of the United Nations is perfect. Living institutions, like anything biological, need the nurture of fresh nutrients, fresh ideas. A living thing either improves or perishes. If it does not adjust to the supreme law of the universe, that is, the universality of useful change, then the definition of anachronism awaits this once inspired body.

The victors of the Second World War wrote the rules and enshrined their importance with permanent seats on the Security Council. The defeated peoples of Japan and Germany, who in one lifetime transformed their countries into economic world leaders, have earned the right to belong to this charmed inner circle. By the same token, other evolving regions which have demonstrated their economic potential should among themselves have the right to a permanent seat on the Security Council.

Lest it be thought that the United Nations is to become only a place for the wealthy, so too should other regions be recognized, such as Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. Room should however remain for countries to secure a place on an individual basis.

The celebration of this anniversary would not have been so worthy a cause if the evils of communism had not been put to rest. We still await atonement by those who imposed such monumental waste on our civilization. I personally would wish to single out Mr. Gorbachev for his leadership in having jettisoned this awful load on our behalf, and creating the opportunities to carry us sumptuously into the twenty-first century.

The United Nations has much unfinished business. I wish to single out one item on that unfinished agenda, and that is the status of the Holy City of Jerusalem. I began with the evolution of the word and ideas. Ideas sometimes take rigid form, and no greater rigidity exists than in religion.

Jerusalem being the birthplace of Christianity, Judaism and the Muslim faiths, all three have equal claim to sovereignty over this cradle of their religion. Jerusalem should become an international city under the umbrella of the United Nations, protected with that status by those who have the power and the moral authority to do so. I see this as a way to peace among the believers. I see this as an idea to erode the terrorism that haunts much of our everyday life around the world. It is not fair that so much energy, time and financial resources be dedicated to coming to terms with this terrorist evil that ought to have no basis for its existence.

Finally, I would urge that this United Nations be no closed shop. Millions of people are still unrepresented among us. The world body must find a way to embrace the world.

43. Saint Kitts and Nevis

Address by
H.E. The Honourable Dr. Denzil Douglas,
Prime Minister

I am deeply honoured to represent the people of Saint Kitts and Nevis on this historic fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

The United Nations has special significance for the Government and people of Saint Kitts and Nevis. Prior to my country's attainment of political independence in 1983, Saint Kitts and Nevis was fortunate to have benefited from United Nations agencies such as the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme and the International Labour Organisation, all of which have helped to prepare my people for the attainment of political independence.

This golden anniversary of the United Nations marks a watershed in the history of our Organization. The configuration of world affairs has changed significantly since the historical signing of the Charter in San Francisco some 50 years ago. However, many old problems still feature prominently on the international agenda. This watershed year, therefore, is a call for nations to marshal their energies and to pool their resources, to harness a future worthy of being passed on to our children.

We are at the proverbial crossroads of international interaction. We stand here today to commemorate 50 years of partnership, of survival and of triumph — our failures notwithstanding. The historic task for us at this present moment is to define the way forward with clarity of vision and purposeful determination.

As I stated in my address to the fiftieth regular session of the General Assembly this past month, my Government believes that the United Nations is a people's Organization. The Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis calls for concerted action to minimize political and economic instability, to eradicate social violence, to protect and preserve the environment and save our planet earth, to provide some support against the effects of natural disasters, and to stop the ever-increasing occurrence of ethnic conflicts.

My Government is proud to support the United Nations in its appeals to all nations to respect fundamental human rights and to accept differences of opinion, be they individual, ethnic or national.

The time has come for us to address holistically the economic inequalities within the world system which allow certain ideas and policies to prevail over others while those which are indigenous and region-specific are ignored.

We celebrate a half-century dedicated to the pursuit of world peace and, yes, we must praise those who created the Organization to prevent global war. However, it is a matter of regret that nations today continue to arm themselves with weapons of mass destruction. As the war machinery continues to thrive, thousands of helpless people die of starvation each year.

In 50 years, the structure of the United Nations has hardly changed. Yet its circumstances have changed beyond anything its founders would recognize. In this new era, in the approaching millennium, we need a new dispensation. We should endeavour to make the Security Council more representative of and responsive to the membership. It is time for the developing world to become permanent members of the Security Council. The goal of appropriate representation should guide our efforts to ensure that all the peoples of the world, which have observed the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, are welcomed into this fraternity of nations.

When we speak of peace, we are also emphasizing the overwhelming question of our national security. I call on all countries to join forces to combat the illegal international narcotics trade and its attendant ills, which represent the major obstacle to sustainable development and security in small States. Such obstacles must be on the agenda of the United Nations in the years to come. As we look to the future, let us continue to recognize the fundamental role of women in our societies. We must ensure that they take their rightful place as partners in securing a better future for us all. We are not doing them a favour. On the contrary, we are according them the respect and rights they are due.

As we enter the new millennium, let us not only boast of great technological marvels, of man's journey into deep space; let us also be able to boast of children who no longer die of hunger, no longer die of avoidable and curable diseases and in war. We need true partnership and cooperation among all the peoples of the world in order to address the problem of worsening poverty.

As we embark upon the second half of the first 100 years of the United Nations, let us use this occasion to challenge ourselves and this great institution to continue working towards the elimination of war, of hunger, of discrimination and of poverty in this, our global village.

Happy birthday, United Nations; may God bless the United Nations not only for another 50 years, but for another hundred years and beyond.

44. The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire

Address by
H.E. Mr. Daniel Kablan Duncan, Prime Minister

[Delivered in French]

When His Excellency Mr. Henri Konan Bedie, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, named me to represent him at the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, he instructed me to say how much he regretted that he was unable to be here owing to the general elections under way at home. My pride in representing him at this meeting stems from the fact that the President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and the Ivorian nation attach great importance to the United Nations whose ideals, enshrined in the Charter, are the founding principles of our country. At this solemn meeting, I should like, on behalf of the Ivorian Government, to renew our unswerving devotion to these universal principles and our determination to see them strengthened still further with every passing day.

When its Minister for Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Mr. Amara Essy presided over the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, Côte d'Ivoire sought through him to demonstrate its interest in and dedication to an institution which, in turn, has confidence in us.

Certain failures notwithstanding, the Organization has achieved laudable successes. We can therefore be legitimately proud of our Organization because it is the institution that has made it possible to forge general consensus on issues of global policy. It is, moreover, the only structure capable of bringing about the implementation of and respect for the great principles of law, thanks simply to the universality of its Charter.

Today, the question is how to reform the United Nations. Our Organization, a mirror on the world, must, 50 years after its creation, still be able to play the role assigned to it while adapting to the changes of our times. As we see it, it is therefore essential to attune our Organization better to the new international context by mobilizing States and public opinion around new objectives based on one observation, namely that the purposes of the Organization has evolved and broadened enormously, and many new imperatives have emerged, such as the need to pay more attention to preventive diplomacy and more vigorously to promote action to develop the poorest countries of the world.

Let us ask what today's world would be like had the United Nations not existed. Let us thus agree to consolidate the values of peace and justice that our common Organization stands for, as an irreplaceable tool — but one susceptible of improvement — to enable the universal conscience to carve out a path straddling the divergent interests of States.

Urged on by the United Nations, the global village has become reality. But, unfortunately, we are not all housed in the same accommodation in this village. Grappling with unprecedented economic difficulties, African countries have become marginalized and see themselves pushed further away with each passing day, while the concept of solidarity is being chipped away and the wealthiest are tending to sequester themselves. In this context, the idea, once again stated in "An Agenda for Development", of establishing a partnership among the rich and poor with a view to development takes on its full meaning and deserves our support.

Above and beyond expeditious statements, it should be noted that this anniversary is being commemorated against the backdrop of financial crisis. When you analyse it, this is a contributions crisis. The richest countries in resources are reticent with regard to discharging fully their obligations, while it can be seen that the vast majority of poor countries are conscientiously, and always with difficulty, striving to find the funds, which is no mean feat in their precarious economies.

At this crucial juncture in its life the United Nations must place special emphasis on equality and complementary between civil and political rights on the one hand, and economic, social and cultural rights on the other. Thus, even in the United Nations, we must not allow the concept of the sovereign equality of Member States to be impaired because of the responsibilities certain large States are assuming. The United Nations must contribute to the emergence of an international civil society.

Today, the poverty and want that are the lot of many underdeveloped countries are the most distressing factors of our civilization, and they are the true breeding grounds of tension and post-cold-war conflicts — by which I mean ethnic-religious clashes and their accompanying traffic in drugs and arms, corruption and money laundering.

With the end of the cold war, nation-States and civil societies have been given a historic opportunity to set in train the vast reform needed to change the lot of all mankind. This great reform is the key to preserving the still-fresh values of peace, justice and solidarity. For the United Nations it must be "the" challenge, the challenge of the next century whose advent we await with such anticipation.

To conclude, I should like to express the gratitude of Côte d'Ivoire to the specialized agencies present in our country. Their support and their dedication are greatly appreciated by all Ivorians. On behalf of the President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, His Excellency Mr. Henri Konan Bedie, I should like to tell them here how deeply gratified we are by the enormous task they have accomplished for our development.

45. The Republic of Mali

Address by

H.E. Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, Prime Minister

[Delivered in French]

It is a great honour for me to speak in this Hall before the representatives of all the world's peoples to celebrate together the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. This exceptional privilege affords me a timely opportunity to deliver, on behalf of the Republic of Mali, its people and its President, His Excellency Alpha Oumar Konaré, our Head of State, a message of hope: to see the United Nations live up to the desire of twenty-first century man to live in peace and security, in social justice and human dignity.

How can we fail here to recall the action the Organization has taken to advance the cause of the self-determination of peoples, to eradicate colonialism and to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination and oppression? The United Nations has thus opened new horizons for many countries and peoples, enabling them to cooperate and to live in brotherhood within a community of interests and fortunes that inspires each people to devote its resources and energy to development, progress and prosperity.

Today, thanks to achievements of human intelligence and thought, the sense of insecurity is more often the product of the concerns of daily life than of the fear of some global cataclysm. Thus, the importance Mali attaches to the definition of a new social covenant that will put a higher priority on international solidarity, as President Alpha Oumer Konaré said in his statement at the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development.

To that end we must readjust our thinking about the concept of development, putting greater stress on its human dimension. That is why we take pleasure in hailing the ongoing reform of United Nations organs, especially those responsible for economic and social development.

All these factors demonstrate that the United Nations is determined to promote a genuine culture of development by mankind and for mankind.

We regard the necessary enlargement of the Security Council, the rehabilitation of the role of the General Assembly and the streamlining of the Secretariat to be an expression of a greater democratization of the United Nations and a greater transparency of its bodies.

At the end of this century and the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, the Organization is faced with an unprecedented situation, for it must confront, simultaneously, subtle and widespread challenges with many and complex implications. The task is a pressing and urgent one. We must act swiftly and in solidarity. Our collective future is at stake.

46. The Holy See

Address by
His Eminence Angelo Cardinal Sodano,
Secretary of State

[Delivered in French]

My presence in this Assembly just a few weeks after the visit of Pope John Paul II bears witness to the esteem of the Holy See for the United Nations. Over the past 50 years the United Nations has been the laboratory where certain aspects of international law have been refined as well as the stage for constant multilateral dialogue. It is also the centre where resolutions have been prepared and adopted to avoid conflicts or to resolve them by responsible mean — or yet again to meet the demands of human rights and solidarity. We must pay tribute to all those who have devoted themselves — at times even at the risk of their lives — to ensuring the triumph of law and international justice.

The United Nations has thus become an indispensable instrument of dialogue and solidarity among peoples. The Holy See believes that the action of the United Nations is irreplaceable for the support of countries in their efforts to strengthen peace, assure social progress and promote liberty.

In his address on 5 October the Holy Father expressed the wish that the Organization might grow as a moral centre, as a family of nations. It can realize this mission only if each State feels that it is accepted and recognized for what it is and is willing to give and take, and if all share the same heritage of values whose highest expressions remain the ideals of justice, freedom, peace and solidarity.

By its presence amongst you the Holy See desires to help give your Organization the spiritual vigour which will enable it more effectively to defend the principles of its fundamental Charter.

His Holiness recalled in this very Hall that

> "we do not live in an irrational and meaningless world"

but that

> "there is a moral logic which is built into human life and which makes possible dialogue between individuals and peoples". *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 20th meeting, p. 3)*

That is why the representatives of the Holy See who participate in your work strive to help ensure that the decisions made will always be governed by the objective good of all, especially of those peoples hardest hit by poverty, injustice or war, instead of being governed by selfish or nationalistic concerns or economic interests alone.

After 50 years of existence the United Nations is called upon to renew its commitments to the international community. It must find new ways to respond to today's challenges; an ethic of solidarity, a passion for peace, and the promotion of respect for differences.

In conclusion, I should like to thank you in the name of Pope John Paul II for the warm welcome you accorded him and for the attention you give to the work of our Observer Mission. The voice of the Holy Father and of his representatives has but one purpose: to remind everyone that the future of humanity depends in the final analysis on a willingness to live together. This is the meaning of that indispensable solidarity among brothers and sisters, all created in the image and likeness of God.

47. The Sultanate of Oman

Address by
His Highness Sayyid Fahad Bin Mahmoud Al-Said,
Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers

[Delivered in Arabic]

At this historic juncture, when we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations it is a great honour for me to take this opportunity to extend to you all our warm and sincere congratulations.

The Sultanate of Oman, under the dynamic leadership of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said has been fully aware, from the very beginning, of the crucial role undertaken by the United Nations since its inception in 1945 in establishing a new international world order based on the universal ideals of justice, equality and stability and in which development will be achieved at the economic and social levels.

Over the past twenty-five years, thanks to those ideals and objectives, which have always been the focal points of the country's policy at all levels, Oman has witnessed the most unprecedented level of economic resurgence ever achieved in its recent history, with particular focus on improving the skills and capabilities of the Omani citizen, the beneficiary and the maker of Oman's development. At the international level, my country, which remains committed to the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and to the norms of international law, has cooperated with the international Organization in seeking to create an equitable international world order, in promoting the efforts aimed at consolidating peace and security and in spreading prosperity and stability in the world.

The principles of Oman's foreign policy and of its international relations are based on the constants of our beliefs and culture as well as on the common good of humanity. On this basis, my country has managed to resolve all outstanding issues with neighbouring countries by peaceful means on the basis of mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

Furthermore, Oman has effectively contributed to the peaceful settlement of many of the contentious global conflicts and has played an extensive role in international conferences and meetings held in order to reach a common understanding of international issues. Oman's participation, as a non-permanent member, in the activities of the Security Council, and its cooperation with other Member States in dealing with international challenges and conflicts have afforded Oman a good opportunity to play its proper role in international affairs with particular emphasis on addressing persistent problems in many parts of the world.

The past epoch of the United Nations history has been a period of many a positive achievement thanks to the effectiveness of multilateral action. The fact that the United Nations has been able to surmount the many great difficulties that stood in its path attests to the success of the Organization and its Member States. However, the achievement of peace, security, economic prosperity and social well-being on a basis of equality and justice will not be possible unless we strengthen our collective efforts and give priority to development plans on the individual and the collective levels.

In the light of the changed international priorities and concerns, the Organization has convened many an international conference to cope with the many problems that beset mankind, the most important of which are those relating to population, environment, development, desertification, drought, and other areas. If these problems are not dealt with seriously and solutions found for them, they will have the same devastating effects of world wars.

The new international order must be characterized by cooperation and should accord priority to finding solutions to the economic problems that face certain States. That is why it is opportune to undertake efforts to enable many countries of the world to use modern technology in developing their resources and improving their economies in the interest of their people.

It is an honour for me to have the opportunity, on behalf of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, to take part in this historic occasion which marks the beginning of a new era in the march of the world's peoples towards a better future.

In conclusion, I shall like to pay tribute, for their efforts, to the Secretaries-General who have successively managed the affairs of the United Nations as well as the staff of the United Nations from 1945 up to this day. Their pioneering efforts have been instrumental in making the mission of the United Nations successful.

48. The Republic of Malta

Address by

H.E. The Honourable Professor Guido de Marco, MP,
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs

The United Nations is a direct product of mankind's most bitter and cruellest experience: the Second World War. In establishing the United Nations, mankind sought to distance itself from the risks inherent in extreme nationalism to move to a higher plane of international action. More than an institution, the United Nations should be seen as a process encompassing mankind's deepest aspirations for global peace, human rights and democratic freedoms.

The past 50 years have both tested and reinvigorated the United Nations. At the institutional level, particular segments may have suffered, but in substance our Organization has resisted the impact of events and survived the challenges of change. At the operational level, the Organization is still struggling to confirm its credibility in fulfilling the aspirations of peoples and nations.

As much as a commemoration of the past, today's event is a dedication to the future.

Today mankind has the power to dominate and control much of the external environment. It has yet to refine those values which determine the use of this force.

Our time is marked by tragic contradictions. When the potential to produce food is practically unlimited, millions still suffer from malnutrition, and thousands of children die daily of starvation. When medicine can miraculously save lives and significantly extend life expectancy, millions needlessly fall victim to curable diseases because they are denied basic health care. When a growing portion of mankind rides together the electronic information highway, hatred and fear still separate communities and thousands are slaughtered in ethnic conflicts. When the holistic wonder of our globe can be seen and admired from outer space, irresponsible development still attacks and ravages the natural environment.

Within this perspective, institutional bickering fades into insignificance.

Ultimately, it is our unified support and political commitment to the principles and ideals enshrined in the Charter that determine the relevance, validity and effectiveness of our Organization.

The spreading of a poverty curtain, of which we warned five years ago, has become more pronounced and more ruthless. Our effort to consolidate human dignity is still eroded by the culture of death peddled by drug traffickers. Our intent to buttress the rule of law is still undermined by international crime.

Universality is the keystone of the United Nations. The notion of universality has consistently guided Malta's action within this Organization. It inspires our role in the pursuit of global and regional peace and cooperation. It underpinned our effort to promote and develop the concept of the common heritage of mankind in the context of the law of the sea and the concerns over climate change. It continues to motivate us in our role as guardians and trustees of the rights and interests of future generations by giving the Trusteeship Council the role of coordinating international efforts to maintain their legacy.

In our efforts to review the principal organs of the United Nations, the equal rights of nations, large and small, must be borne in mind.

We believe, and have always maintained, that there has to be a revitalization of the role of the General Assembly, the only organ in which we are all permanent members. In the restructuring of the Security Council, a symbiotic relationship between the Council and the General Assembly is of the essence.

These first 50 years have shown that the moral and political foundations of the United Nations are rooted in ideals and aspirations which go beyond a simple aggregate of membership and the search for pragmatic solutions to specific and immediate problems. The whole is more than the sum of its parts.

The founding fathers of the United Nations hitched their wagon to a star in charting the course of the future. This global vision rests and depends on the recognition of and respect for the rights, freedoms and dignity of each and every human being.

In building a second-generation United Nations, the main ingredients remain our will and commitment. This process requires our engagement to ensure the political and financial support for the Organization to act in order to have a world which is free from want and to ensure peace and freedom.

49. The Syrian Arab Republic

Address by
H.E. Mr. Farouk Al-Shara',
Minister for Foreign Affairs

[Delivered in Arabic]

The fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations poses a legitimate question. The question is not about the world body's achievements to date, which have been important enough but, rather, about what should we do within the framework of the Organization in order for it to be able to build for mankind a better future in which there would be no place for aggression, occupation, justice, poverty or underdevelopment.

Since the end of the cold war, the international scene has been in a state of transition. No one can predict what this transition will lead to or when it will end as it is characterized by murkiness and instability.

This is a transition from a world order whose collapse left behind a great deal of rubble, many wars and several fundamental questions, to an alternative order that is still struggling to rise from under the rubble, still trying to find ways to put out the fires that continue to rage in many places, and trying to find answers to the many questions that have remained unanswered.

This is a daunting task and a heavy responsibility that no one individual State can successfully face up to, no matter how powerful or wise it may be. Rather, it requires collective sincere efforts by the Member States, efforts that should be immune against the mentality of the cold war and the ambitions of hegemony.

It is, therefore, our view that the United Nations continues to be the best framework for mobilizing such efforts and contributions in the face of present and future challenges. It would be wrong to believe that a new world order has risen already and has become a fait accompli, or that we have to either board the train or miss it. Syria, in the words of President Hafez Al-Assad, like many other States of the world, will not support an international order in which it has no role and no interest. Those who have followed the deliberations of the Non-Aligned Movement Summit held last week in Colombia, can clearly reach the same conclusion.

Consequently, we shall continue, together with developing countries and with others, to seek to contribute to the creation of a just international order that would recognize the equality between States and peoples and their right to dignity, freedom and development and put its faith in international cooperation based on mutual respect among States and the non-interference in their internal affairs.

This gathering, which brings together such a large number of Heads of State and Governments on this fiftieth anniversary, reflects two important facts. The first is that there is a state of general anxiety shared by both winners and losers in the aftermath of the cold war.

The second fact is that a unanimity has crystallized of late among the States of the world on the need to reform the United Nations, to render it more efficient in rising to present and future challenges.

Improvement of the performance of the United Nations and the democratization of decision-making within it, cannot be attained if the stronger and richer States impose their selfish interests at the expense of those of the overwhelming majority of the world's countries. It is the tendency to do just that which lies at the source of the genuine concern that has been generated by certain recent practices and experiences.

The decision in May of this year to indefinitely extend the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty with the accompanying exceptions entrenching the monopoly of those possessing nuclear weapons and the pressures brought to bear on those who do not possess them and who sincerely wish to rid mankind of nuclear weapons, was the starkest proof of this tendency which highlights the dangers inherent in the duality of standards and concepts prevailing in contemporary international relations.

Since its creation, the United Nations has played an important role in decolonization and eliminating racism. It has scored great successes in this regard, the latest being the brilliant achievement in South Africa. In our region, however, Israel, despite paying lip service to peace, continues to occupy Arab lands, it continues to build settlements on those lands and continues to sow the seeds of resentment and hatred throughout the region.

It is no secret that Israel does not want the United Nations and refuses to give it a role in bringing peace to the Middle East. Thus, the United States peace initiative was the potential means to convince Israel to withdraw from all the Arab lands it occupied in 1967 in order to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978), as well as the land-for-peace formula.

After four years of negotiations, however, it has become clear that Israel used the American initiative, first to rid itself of the United Nations; second, to hamstring the American initiative itself; and, last but not least, to prevent the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Today, Israel's Government is trying to give the world the impression that it has gone a long way towards achieving peace and forging relations in our region, while the very peoples of the region — Arabs and Israelis alike —

realize that peace is still out of reach. The real enemies of peace are those who annexed Al-Quds and the Golan; those who encouraged the continuation of occupation, colonial settlement and blind extremism; those who continue to reject complete withdrawal for complete and comprehensive peace as proposed by Syria and supported by the Arabs and the world.

If this opportunity for peace is lost — and we hope that it will not be — Israel will bear a heavy responsibility in the eyes of the world; the world that has, on this fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, declared its strong yearning for comprehensive peace on the basis of justice and equality and for a better future for the peoples of our region and of the whole planet.

The Republic of Tunisia

Address by
H.E. Mr. Habib Ben Yahia,
Minister for Foreign Affairs

[Delivered in Arabic]

I have the honour to read the following message from His Excellency Zina el-Abidina ben Ali, President of the Republic of Tunisia on this historic occasion:

"At the time that the United Nations is commemorating its fiftieth anniversary, I take great pleasure on behalf of Tunisia in extending greetings to your august Assembly and in wishing you further success in what you are doing to strengthen this edifice that is our Organization, while consolidating its progress towards the realization of the aspirations of mankind and the ideals of peace, justice and the well-being of all, thanks to a convergence of views and a pooling of the efforts of all. Our highest hopes are to see solidarity and understanding triumph over dissension and conflict.

"The United Nations has done a great deal in the service of peace since its establishment in the difficult times that followed in the wake of World War II. It has saved humanity from destruction and contributed to the emergence of the national liberation movement in various parts of the world. It has championed the advocates of fraternity and equality against the forces of injustice and every form of discrimination.

"Notwithstanding the difficulties that faced it, the United Nations has shown itself to be the very embodiment of human wisdom, and has demonstrated, through the many conventions, instruments and international machineries, and through its many outstanding efforts and activities in various areas, the great value of combining the soundness of its foundations with the loftiness of its objectives.

"Our Organization has strengthened itself by establishing the many specialized bodies and agencies, to which it entrusted the responsibility of supporting national efforts in combating illiteracy, poverty and disease, in consolidation of the foundations of peace and international cooperation, and in search for the means of putting progress within the reach of all those who seek it.

"That is why we pay special tribute to all those bodies and agencies of the Organization and renew our support for them in order for them to persevere in their humanitarian mission. Since independence, Tunisia has valued this mission of the United Nations, and has accorded to the principles embodied in the Organization's Charter a very high place in its national scale of values. In this, we have been inspired by our strong resolve to shoulder, within the context of United Nations activity, the responsibility of defending the cause of right and justice the world over.

"That was the reason why Tunisia was one of the first countries to respond to the late Dag Hammarskjöld's call to participate in the first United Nations peace-keeping operation ever, in the Congo. Five years after Tunisia's independence, the late Al-Mongui Selim, one of our outstanding diplomats, presided over the 16th session of the General Assembly and was thus the first son of Africa to hold that post.

"Proceeding from the choices of our people, we have striven, since November 1987, to promote those choices in line with humanity's ambition to uphold freedoms in their widest sense and in consonance with the belief that man was born free as the great reformers in our age-old civilization have taught us.

"Thus while we are focused on consolidating the foundations of democracy at the national level and on institutionalizing respect for human rights at all levels, we have striven to spread the culture of tolerance and solidarity among our children — boys and girls alike. At the same time, we have spared no effort in supporting every step taken by the United Nations to disseminate those values. We are determined to continue to deploy efforts in this direction in consonance with our belief that man's most worthy endeavour is that which aims at benefiting his fellow-man.

"We believe that mankind has embarked on a stage in its history that affords it unprecedented opportunities to achieve a level of constructive cooperation it has never attained before, especially after the end of bipolarity, and with the more effective communications technologies that are now available to it. We now have an opportunity to promote dialogue, understanding and cooperation between cultures and peoples in the interests of world peace.

"The international community is duty-bound to take advantage of these factors, and to forge them into useful tools in building a world order that would be based on peace, justice, equity and respect for law and international legality. This has been the purpose of our efforts in all international forums in consonance with the tendency enshrined in 'An Agenda for Peace' and 'An Agenda for Development', provided by the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

"We in Tunisia are well aware of this concomitance of peace and development. The future of peace and democracy depends, both at the level of individual societies and at the level of various peoples, on our ability to respond to the exigencies of comprehensive and sustainable development at the national, regional and global levels.

"Proceeding from our belief that peace is not merely the prevention of armed conflict and the resolution of crises but is also the eradication of their root causes, we are of the opinion that the best way of doing that is to create a close link between development efforts, enlightenment, enshrinement of human rights and the values of democracy side by side with the virtues of tolerance and moderation.

"Tunisia is acutely aware of the threats posed to the safety of human society by terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking, the deterioration of the environment, the spread of disease and the reappearance of certain pandemics and of the fact that such threats could never stop at the national boundaries of States. Proceeding from this awareness, we have spread no effort, especially during our Chairmanship of the Organization of African Unity, in trying to highlight the terrible consequences of these scourges, and in calling for the adoption of joint policies, at the regional level, to control them and stop their spread. We have also been striving, in the context of international institutions, to develop specific means of achieving worldwide coordination and cooperation to deal with and eradicate those scourges.

"These are enormous and urgent tasks, which no State can undertake on its own. They are the responsibility of the international community as a whole. Today, the international community has no choice but to combine its efforts, speedily and with the necessary efficacy, to maintain peace, stability and prosperity, while consolidating the positive changes which have been achieved the world over and from which humanity is entitled to expect dividends.

"No one can doubt that the United Nations is still the most appropriate means for the attainment of human solidarity in the context of a 'comprehensive contract of peace and development'. That is the thrust of the appeal we have been making from this rostrum. We did so in 1989, convinced as we were of the need to formulate and implement an international plan to deal with the scourge of world-wide poverty and hunger.

"There can be no doubt that our hopes for the United Nations and the responsibilities we assign to it make it incumbent upon us all to strive to ensure that its principles are abided by, to support its efforts and to strengthen its means of action. The Tunisia of the new era is convinced that the Organization is still very definitely the ideal framework to deal with international problems, safeguard peace and stability throughout the world and promote cooperation between nations for the benefit of all."

51. The State of Bahrain

Address by
H.E. Shaikh Mohammed Bin Mubarak Al-Khalifa,
Minister for Foreign Affairs and Special Envoy
of His Highness the Amir of the State of Bahrain

[*Delivered in Arabic*]

It gives me pleasure to address this international gathering today as the representative of His Highness Shaikh Isa Bin Salman Al-Khalifa, the Amir of the State of Bahrain, and to convey to all participants His Highness the Amir's greetings and his sincere wishes for the success of this celebration and of the United Nations.

Our international Organization is commemorating, and with it we are celebrating, the fiftieth anniversary of its establishment in the wake of the Second World War which the international community and all peace-loving nations had resolved to make the last destructive war in the history of mankind. Through the Charter and noble principles of the United Nations, they determined to erase the consequences of that war and the destruction that it brought about.

On this occasion, of which we are all proud, and in the presence of this high-level assemblage, we express our gratitude for those who contributed to the creation of this international edifice through their distinguished thoughts and magnanimity and for those who, up to the present, have carried the banner or sacrificed their lives in the cause of security, peace and the promotion of justice, prosperity and stability for the peoples of the world.

The fact that this remarkable anniversary is taking place at a time when the human race is looking forward to a new century of civilization heightens its significance and places the great responsibility on us, States and peoples, of meeting this crossroads together in a manner commensurate with the challenges before us and the aspirations of all our peoples.

In an era fraught with developments and successive and accelerated changes, this anniversary serves as a timely opportunity for all the Governments and peoples of the world to reflect upon the performance, in terms of both its achievements and failures, of this 50-year-old Organization. It is also an occasion for all of them to present their visions and thoughts on how the Organization can best evolve to cope with the world's enormous political, economic, social and cultural events and changes, while drawing object-lessons from the missteps and pitfalls of the past by seeking to restructure the United Nations so as to allow it to keep pace with the age.

To that end, efforts should be made to reinvigorate the General Assembly, in which all Member States are represented. Moreover, the Security Council's effectiveness should be enhanced through the expansion of its membership and the implementation of every means of improving its efficiency. In that context, it is also crucial that we strengthen the role of the Economic and Social Council in order to allow it to function effectively in promoting the welfare of all peoples. It is neither reasonable nor acceptable that one fifth of the world's population of approximately 6 billion should continue to live in abject poverty. Concerted efforts are therefore essential to address this problem. Social and economic well-being and freedom from hunger, disease, illiteracy and unemployment are fundamental if prosperity is to be attained.

The United Nations has passed many a test and has demonstrated, since its establishment, that it is quite capable of surmounting crises and facing up to any challenge that contravenes the principles of its Charter and runs counter to its noble objectives. One of the most outstanding achievements of the United Nations has been its success in putting an end to colonialism and to apartheid. The Organization's activities in the area of maintaining peace and security in the world are increasing and there seems to be general support for the recommendations put forward by the Secretary-General in his "An Agenda for Peace", as discussions in the General Assembly, the Security Council and other bodies have shown, in particular with respect to efforts to encourage the settlement of disputes by peaceful means and to prevent conflicts in the framework of preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping and peace-building. The world now yearns for a new age of peace and comprehensive development.

Both the State of Bahrain, whose national independence was associated with the positive role of the United Nations in enabling peoples to enjoy self-determination, and the Gulf region, which a few years ago witnessed the formation of the greatest international alliance in history to deter aggression and uphold international legality, are living testimony to our international Organization's success in achieving stability and peace in a vital region of the world, whose security requires respect for existing boundaries at all times and commitment to the norms and principles of international legality at all levels. There is no doubt that the achievement of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East, with the participation of all parties, will be one of the United Nations most important achievements.

The future of the United Nations depends now more than ever on the extent of its ability to influence events and to mould the future, especially in an era of accelerating change and development influenced by the dramatic communications revolution in the world. If this Organization is to carry out its task of peacemaking and ensuring the prevalence of justice, it behoves us, peoples and Governments alike, to present the twenty-first century with a United Nations capable of promoting the causes of justice, development and equality for all.

52. The Kingdom of Bhutan

Address by
H.E. Mr. Dawa Tsering,
Minister for Foreign Affairs

I have the honour to convey to the President of the General Assembly, and through him to all representatives, the warm greetings and good wishes of His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, King of Bhutan, for the success of the Special Commemorative Meeting of the United Nations.

My delegation is proud to join the other nations of the world in celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The fact that so many Heads of State and Government are here today is eloquent testimony to the importance of the United Nations in the life of the international community.

The Kingdom of Bhutan has always remained a sovereign, independent nation throughout its long history, although we too have suffered at the hands of an imperial Power. The unique Mahayana Buddhist civilization which flourished in the Himalayas from the seventh century A.D. onwards, and of which Bhutan is the last remaining bastion, has enriched the lives of our people and given strength and resilience to our society down the ages. Every Bhutanese is proud of his rich cultural heritage and pristine natural environment. Although Bhutan is a small, underdeveloped country, difficult of access, landlocked and mountainous, we do possess profound spiritual truths and traditional knowledge in alternative medicine which we wish to share with the rest of the world. We are also keen to make our own modest contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the promotion of the unity, friendship and well-being of the entire human family.

The United Nations means different things to different nations around the globe. It is only natural that we should view the world through our own perspective, influenced by our historical experience, geographical setting, traditions and value system, and compulsions arising out of the aspirations of our people for political and cultural survival. For a small nation like Bhutan, membership of the United Nations enables us to participate in shaping the international agenda on numerous issues that are of importance to our people, ranging from population, environment, poverty, disarmament and social development to protection of cultural heritage. We benefit from the activities of the United Nations family of organizations, whose assistance has made a real difference in the everyday lives of our people.

The fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations is an occasion, not only of joy and celebration, but also of thought and reflection. The achievements of the United Nations are far too numerous to belittle. Whether as an instrument of peaceful change in ideologies and political systems during the past 50 years, or as a formulator of international principles and standards on a wide range of matters, of which the Charter is the centrepiece, its achievements are impressive by any yardstick. The United Nations has helped to mould the international agenda on numerous issues and given legitimacy to many new doctrines and ideas. The end of the cold war gives us hope that we can build on the shared norms and values of the United Nations and strive for higher standards in international relations in order to achieve collective security and socio-economic development in a better-ordered world.

On the historic occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, as the world reflects on the past half century and looks to the future, it is fitting to review the case for reforming and restructuring the United Nations. Its present structure and distribution of powers was conceived 50 years ago when it had a membership of only some 50 countries. Since then, the membership has nearly quadrupled. However, the interests of the vast majority of the members are not represented in the Security Council, which is the only body of any real authority within the system. In our view, the reform of the United Nations must begin with the expansion of the Security Council so that it will represent the interests of all countries equally, and not just those of a privileged few. It is only fair and just that more equitable representation of developing countries and deserving candidates which have emerged since 1945 should now be accommodated.

Bhutan believes that on the basis of any objective criteria Japan, one of the foremost economic powers of the world today, would qualify for permanent membership, and among developing countries India's candidature for permanent membership merits equal consideration. Apart from the fact that it has a population comprising one-sixth of mankind, a large economy with enormous potential for rapid growth, an impressive track record of valuable contributions to shaping the United Nations' agenda on vital issues and participation in major United Nations peace-keeping operations, and the ability to assume full obligations arising from permanent membership, India's case also merits serious consideration on the basis of balanced geographical representation and equitable representation of developing countries.

In our view, the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is also an opportune time for us to reorganize its other organs, particularly the General Assembly and its committees, to overcome its present inadequacies and shortcomings through a process of restructuring and revitalization, so that our Organization can become more efficient and result-oriented to face the challenges of the twenty-first century.

53. The Republic of Kenya

Address by

H.E. The Honourable Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka, MP,
Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

The founders of the United Nations were inspired, by their strong will, to overcome the terrible experiences of the two world wars to create a world Organization which would ensure that such experiences would not recur. They were inspired by their sensitivity to the human suffering resulting from destruction by the wars to undertake ambitious reconstruction programmes which turned around the prospects for Europe within 10 short years.

They were similarly inspired to adopt the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration against colonialism, in support of the right of self-determination of the peoples in the colonized territories.

On this occasion, we can state with confidence that the Organization has succeeded in the prevention of a third world war; that it has drastically reduced inter-state armed conflicts; that it has made much progress in the codification of international law; that it has provided a conducive climate and means for the reconstruction of Europe; that it has almost completed the mission of decolonization; and that it has withstood the cold war. The Organization has also done well in the coordination of international action to deal with disasters, eradication and containment of diseases, and resettlement of refugees and displaced persons.

The end of the cold war, however, has been followed by an unprecedented explosion of internal conflicts unleashed by the rise of ethnic and religious nationalism. The size and complexity of some of these conflicts have led to disintegration of some Member States of this Organization. The absence of a delegation from Somalia eloquently testifies to this fact.

The United Nations has responded to the conflicts with peace-keeping operations in virtually all regions of the world. Recent experiences have exposed the strengths and weaknesses of the Organization in this critical area.

Equally disquieting is the current trend towards abandonment of support for both bilateral and multilateral development programmes. It had been expected that the end of the cold war would result in huge savings from defence budgets to be applied to development financing. However, what we are witnessing now, five years after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, is an unprecedented withdrawal of development support by the developed countries.

The Organization has addressed the socio-economic challenges through, among others, conferences on: population, social development, the child, women, human rights, the environment, and human settlements. Plans of action adopted by these conferences are, however, seriously undermined by the withdrawal of effective support by the developed countries.

Like the founders of the United Nations, we, as today's leaders, should take full cognizance of the inseparable relationship between peace and development. We must give impetus to our Organization to enhance its capabilities in, among other fields: first, peaceful resolution of conflicts; second, mobilizing international support for socio-economic development and the worldwide eradication of poverty; third, strengthening the productive capacity and competitiveness of the developing countries, especially in Africa; and lastly, the progressive development and application of international law.

The United Nations, like any other Organization, needs a sound financial base in order to carry out its mandate effectively. In this regard, we urge Member States to honour their Charter obligations by paying their assessed contributions in full and, whenever possible, on time.

May I borrow words spoken from this very rostrum by His Holiness Pope John Paul II, as follows:

> "The United Nations needs to rise more and more above the cold status of an administrative institution and become a moral centre where all the nations of the world feel at home and develop a shared awareness of being, as it were, a family of nations ... In an authentic family the strong do not dominate ..." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 20th meeting, p. 5)*

As we move into the next millennium, the United Nations family should be guided by the spirit of its Charter. No member of the family need be left behind, provided we are all ever mindful of one another's needs and sensibilities.

I would have concluded at this point, but in view of a statement made this morning I am compelled to exercise my right of reply. President Bizimungu took advantage of this solemn occasion to drag Kenya into Rwandan problems by making an unprovoked attack on Kenya's Head of State. Kenya firmly refuses to be drawn into Rwandan problems. We have stated time and again that Kenya will cooperate with the Tribunal for Rwanda to ensure that justice is applied to all. In this regard, Kenya has consistently held the view that the root causes of the Rwandan problems need to be addressed comprehensively. It is extremely important that the events preceding the genocide, particularly the shooting down of the plane which killed the Presidents of both Rwanda and Burundi in April 1994, thus triggering genocide, be investigated and the culprits punished for their crimes.

54. The Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros

Address by
H.E. Mr. Mouzaoir Abdallah,
Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation

[*Delivered in French*]

I should like at the outset to join my voice with those of the speakers who preceded me in congratulating Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral on his well-deserved election to the presidency of this historic session commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization.

The celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is a historic occasion, on which we wish to express our satisfaction at the indisputable role that the Organization plays in all the areas of present international relations.

We pay resounding tribute to the free nations that founded the United Nations, an Organization that has become, over the years, a global political arena that is essential to the *rapprochement* of peoples.

The role of the Organization of the United Nations in decolonization, advances in international law, respect for human rights and the identification of certain major problems such as those relating to population and the environment illustrate the growing accomplishments and the progress of our Organization.

The people of the Comoros will not forget that it is thanks to the United Nations that the legal battle relating to the boundaries of the Republic of the Comoros was won on 12 November 1965, four months after our independence.

As regards peace, solidarity and the right of peoples to a life of dignity and prosperity, much remains to be done.

As to the implementation of new development strategies to bring about a more just and equitable international economic order, we are obliged to note that the gulf continues to widen between rich and poor countries. We also note with regret that despite efforts at adjustment and at economic and financial recovery, the debt burden and the rigidity of its regulation weigh heavily on our countries.

A new approach to the repayment of this debt must be sought, out of a twofold concern for humanity and solvency. The United Nations must strive towards this, otherwise small countries such as mine are likely to be excluded completely from the broad movement of hope, responsibility and creativity that is now taking shape and in which we firmly believe.

The act of aggression perpetrated against the Republic of Comoros on the night of 27 to 28 September wounded my country and plunged it into mourning, thus aggravating an already precarious economic and social situation. I would urgently appeal, from this lofty rostrum, that everything be done to put an end to the criminal acts of destruction by mercenaries through determined, uncompromising and stringent international legislation.

I should like to take this solemn opportunity to convey to the international community the profound gratitude of the Government of the National Union of Transition, headed by His Excellency Mr. Caabi Elyachroutu, and of the people of Comoros for its support and sympathy for my country during this tragic and painful ordeal.

At this stage, I should like to reiterate our sincere thanks to the Government and the people of France. Allow me also to convey to His Excellency Mr. Jacques Chirac, President of the French Republic, the high esteem in which the people of the Comoros hold him for the interest he shows in developing the ties of friendship that link our two countries.

The determined intervention by an élite unit of the French Army during the night of 3 October last, pursuant to the defence accords that link the Comoros and France and at the request of Prime Minister Caabi Elyachroutu, made it possible to restore constitutional order.

Lastly, I should like to pay heartfelt tribute to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, our brother, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for the decisive action he took at the request of the Organization of African Unity and of countries friendly to the Comoros, which included the United States of America, in the very first hours of the aggression committed against my country. The Comorian people will not forget this.

On the eve of the third millennium, my country expresses the hope that the United Nations will become the forum for convergence and arbitration of a world that needs to replenish and revitalize itself, on the basis of the universal values of generosity, solidarity and peace, of which it is the worthy and legitimate guarantor.

55. The Islamic State of Afghanistan

Address by
H.E. Dr. Najibullah Lafraie,
Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

I am especially privileged to make this statement on behalf of His Excellency Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani, President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, while reminding the world family of the efforts made over the last 50 years to achieve global peace and stability and to ensure human rights and economic and social progress, also offers us an opportunity to meticulously re-evaluate the extent to which we, the peoples of the United Nations, have fulfilled our commitments to ensure respect for the provisions of the Charter.

The objectives and goals enshrined in the Charter are indicative of the common interest in peace, stability, democracy and human rights, in preference to the illegitimate strategic goals of those enjoying better military and economic capabilities.

It is a fact that all Member States share responsibility for the aforementioned principles. However, the prevailing international mechanism grants a comparatively better status to the major Powers than to other States. Thus, their resolve to remain loyal to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and to serve international peace, stability and economic development is even more vitally important.

Afghanistan, a former Member of the League of Nations, became a Member of the United Nations as early as 1946. It has all along remained loyal and committed to the principles of the United Nations. However, when Afghanistan was invaded by the Red Army of the former Soviet Union in 1979, the United Nations did very little to repulse the aggression. We are grateful to the United Nations General Assembly for overwhelmingly condemning the aggression. The Security Council, however, remained completely inactive. The reason was that the former Soviet Union, a permanent member of the Council, could use its veto power against any decision of the Council.

That is why we, as a non-aligned country, share the views expressed by other Member States with an emphasis on the need for the democratization, transparency and reform of the Security Council, including the revision of the right of veto, which we consider as the tyranny of the minority over the majority. The veto rule can be replaced by the requirement of a two-thirds majority.

We are all well aware of the enormous sufferings of the Afghan people during the years of Soviet occupation. The question is why war-stricken Afghanistan is again facing foreign conspiracies and plots stirring national and ethnic hatred among its people. Is this not a crime against humanity? Does it not clearly exemplify the violation of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of others? Do the circles in the neighbouring country who finance, arm and train the band of the so-called Taliban know what they stand for? They should know that they stand for extremism and obscurantism. They believe in violence and negate every single principle of democracy and human rights. This is in contrast to the Islamic State of Afghanistan, which has all along proved its commitment to democracy, human rights and peaceful coexistence with others, especially its neighbours, and has campaigned against terrorism, extremism and narcotic drugs.

I should like to bring to the attention of the world community the fact that right at this moment, a foreign-engineered conspiracy has once again channelled the Taliban mercenaries to the gates of the capital, Kabul. The aim is to impose by force and violence a puppet clique against the will of our people. It is very unfortunate that the world is standing a silent spectator witnessing the further devastation of an already war-torn Afghanistan.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan will continue to defend its national sovereignty, territorial integrity and the right of its people to determine their own future. We consider dialogue and negotiation within the framework of the United Nations peace efforts headed by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General as the best means to achieve a lasting peace in the country.

We earnestly expect the international community to render support for the cause of peace and the prevention of further killing and destruction in Afghanistan.

Each and every document of the United Nations talks about respecting the right to life, liberty and security, as well as the will of nations. During this Special Commemorative Meeting, the world leaders have also presented speeches about the future of the world and the ways and means of implementing the provisions of the United Nations Charter, which would remain merely beautiful expressions unless translated into practice. Let us not forget, however, that at this very moment millions of human beings go on living in poverty, hunger and deprivation and without any access to primary health care and basic education.

In spite of all these miseries inflicted on the majority of our human family, thousands of millions of dollars are being spent each year on the production of new and sophisticated weapons for the annihilation of our very lives.

Considering the fact that the end of polarization and the cold war should bring considerable reductions in militarization, is it not time, on such a glorious occasion, to commit ourselves to donate just a small portion of these unnecessary expenditures to the most impoverished countries of our world family?

Finally, let us pray to God Almighty for a successful common endeavour to see the United Nations as a more just world Organization serving as the beacon of hope for the human family.

The United Republic of Tanzania

Address by
H.E. Mr. Daudi Ngelautwa Mwakawago,
Chairman of the Delegation

It is a signal honour and privilege to address this Special Commemorative Meeting of the General Assembly on behalf of my Head of State and Government. Let me at the outset pay tribute to you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly, and allow me also to express my delegation's sincere appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his dedicated service to the world.

The United Republic of Tanzania, in more ways than one, is a product of the good work of the United Nations. The mainland, Tanganyika, was a trusteeship Territory from 1945 to 1961, having assumed that status after the collapse of the League of Nations. But even Zanzibar, which is the other component of the Union, enjoyed the support of the Organization in its quest for liberation as a Protectorate under the British.

Thus, these celebrations are Tanzania's celebrations. We join other similar States in paying tribute to the United Nations for the sterling work it has done on decolonization.

The United Nations has done more than achieve decolonization. Its work in many countries of the world, especially in the South, is seen through its various agencies.

As we meet today, we look back on 50 years of illustrious history. But the main objective is to focus on the future. The Organization needs revitalization. One area is to democratize its structures, especially the Security Council, so that they reflect current realities, both in terms of membership and the scope of the issues before the world body. It is imperative that equitable geographical representation be at the centrepiece of reforms.

The second area of concern is development. The Assembly has heard addresses from many leaders. There is a resounding call for increased resources and a frontal attack on poverty. The scourge of poverty and environmental degradation is the new war facing the United Nations. It cannot be wished away or left to the developing countries to fight it. It requires the efforts and solidarity of the international community through the leadership of the United Nations.

The third imperative of our time is South-South cooperation. Although there is so much talk of the globalization of the economy, unless the South gets its act together, it will not enjoy the benefits of globalization. Some countries in the South, especially in Asia and Latin America, have made very significant progress. Their experience and expertise are not only relevant, but can help to spearhead development in the South at a pace commensurate with their traditions and values. The United Nations has a role to play in facilitating that cooperation. I need hardly emphasize that the development of the South is negatively affected by the huge debt burden, a question that requires an urgent response by the creditor nations and institutions.

Tanzania has followed the peace-keeping process with keen interest. We believe the success stories are there for everyone to see. None the less, it is my delegation's view that the mandates need looking into. In recent years there have been so many contradictions that have tarnished the image of the United Nations.

Lastly, the Rwanda and Burundi developments have been debated here at length. But it is very clear to my delegation that whatever steps will be taken to deal with the conflict, it is absolutely necessary to address the question of the return of the refugees to their countries of origin. Failure to do so will only breed more conflicts in the future. Tanzania has over one million refugees from the two neighbouring countries. It is a huge burden on a poor least developed country.

In conclusion, we reiterate our faith in the United Nations, since it is the one universal institution where we all belong, big or small, wealthy or poor. The United Nations is us — its Members. It does not exist apart from us. We can make it strong, or weaken it by our actions of commission or omission.

It is my delegation's view that a fitting gift to the Organization on this occasion is for all its Members to live by the tenets of the Charter.

Grenada

Address by
H.E. Dr. Robert E. Millette,
Chairman of the Delegation

As we celebrate the golden years of the United Nations the words of the Chinese philosopher Lao-tzu come to mind: "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step".

Several important meetings, conferences and debates preceded the official launching of the United Nations on 24 October 1945 in San Francisco.

The meeting that took place somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean between President Roosevelt of the United States of America and Prime Minister Churchill of the United Kingdom, on 14 August 1941, resulted in a declaration of principles known as the Atlantic Charter. This Charter expressed the hope:

> "to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want".

The impact of human destruction was significant and demanded a reassurance among nations to find alternative approaches to conflict resolution and peacemaking, and a firm commitment to maintain world peace and security.

On 30 October 1943 in Moscow, the foreign ministers of the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and China proclaimed that their Governments recognized the need to establish a general international organization based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all peace-loving States, and open to membership by all such States, large and small, for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Some refer to the United Nations as the biggest debating society in the world, in which perception takes precedence over substance, rhetoric over reality — a Tower of Babel where debates consist of grotesque rituals and recurrent irrelevancies.

The truth of the matter is that the United Nations, as a relatively young institution, is the quintessential example of humanity's struggle for peace among nations and within nations. It bears the marks of humanity's triumphs and failures. However, in the pursuit of peace, the United Nations continues, to paraphrase Isaiah, "to run and not be weary, to walk and not grow faint".

From the first meeting of the General Assembly in London on 10 January 1946, with a membership then of 51 nations, to today's commemorative celebration at United Nations Headquarters with a membership of 185 nations, the United Nations continues to proclaim loud and clear its mission of peace initiatives in world health, human rights, education and the environment.

Since the end of the cold war several democracies have emerged, resulting in a more democratic world. Surely, we have to support those democracies, assist those countries that are in the process of building democratic structures, and encourage those that are yet to embrace the democratic principles.

While we applaud the gains of the last 50 years, we seek to find solutions to such problems as drug trafficking, regional and ethnic conflicts, debt burdens, barriers to trade, international terrorism, and environmental threats. What does this mean for small States like Grenada? What are the implications of these challenges to the survival and security of small States?

We must not be discouraged. Rather, we must assist the United Nations as it responds to the new economic and political realities of world peace and international development.

As we seek to restructure and position the United Nations for the twenty-first century, we must use new technology to support the social and economic development of large and small States. Small States look to the United Nations for assistance in information technology and human resource development. This assistance will result in social and economic progress and thereby enable us — the small States — to attract capital and investment.

The Security Council should reflect the new economic and political realities. Greater emphasis should be placed on improving the effectiveness of the work of the United Nations in peace-keeping and peacemaking and, all the more so, on efforts towards regional peace-keeping.

We see the United Nations as a forum for coordinating issues relating to world peace. To that end, we would wish to see the United Nations agencies work in close collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions and with other intergovernmental agencies to implement social and economic development programmes.

The celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is a time for reflection on the principles of its Charter. We must ask ourselves whether we have adhered to the principles of the Charter, whether we have truly embraced the principle of universality.

Mr. President, Grenada concurs with your position on the principle of universality as stated in the Charter of the United Nations. In that light, we bring once again to the attention of the international community the exclusion of the Republic of China from this world Organization since 1971. We deem this a great loss to the United Nations and urge the opening of dialogue as a first step in finding a solution to this problem.

We remain confident that a new United Nations will work assiduously to achieve the goals set out and accomplish the tasks before it. We, the Member States, are committed to the United Nations as it continues in its efforts to ensure peace and security for the world in which we live.

On behalf of the Prime Minister of my country, Grenada, and on behalf of my people, I thank you.

58. South Pacific Forum

Address by
H.E. Mr. Nikenike Vurobaravu,
Deputy Secretary-General

It is a great honour and privilege to speak on behalf of the South Pacific Forum at this Special Commemorative Meeting in honour of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The Forum is new to the United Nations process, having been admitted as Observer only last year. But like many of the previous distinguished speakers, we are deeply committed to the ideals and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

Previous speakers have described more eloquently the record and achievements of the United Nations since its inception 50 years ago. The vision on which the United Nations was built — peace, human dignity, justice, economic and social progress — will be as valid in the next 50 years as it was in the last 50. And, in an increasingly complex and interdependent world, the role of the United Nations in pursuing that vision is of more and more importance to small countries, such as those of the South Pacific Forum. The existence and programmes of the United Nations help guarantee our peace and security, and promote our economic and social development in ways we are too small to manage entirely for ourselves.

We applaud, therefore, the expanded and invigorated role that the United Nations is playing in the post-cold-war world. While our own South Pacific region is, thankfully, free from the sort of local conflict still far too prevalent in other parts of the world, we fully support the development of the peace-keeping and peacebuilding role of the United Nations. The Forum particularly welcomes the progress towards real nuclear disarmament that has been possible in the new international environment. The indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons a few months ago was a major step forward. Even more important is the prospect of conclusion next year of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, which would ban all nuclear tests in all environments for all time. It is vital, if the world is to achieve the objectives of peace and security embodied in the United Nations Charter, that this opportunity to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty be seized.

In this context, however, I must echo the Forum's deep disappointment and concern at the resumption this year of nuclear testing in the Pacific. This testing poses a serious threat to the welcome positive developments of nuclear disarmament to which I have referred, to our Pacific environment, to the health of Pacific peoples and to the ideals of the United Nations to which we are all here this week to lend our fullest support. Therefore, the Forum welcomes the recent announcement by the United States, Britain and France that they intend to support the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, and we look forward to their early signing of its Protocols.

The Charter of the United Nations also recognizes that to attain the primary objective of maintaining peace and security the deep-seated economic and social causes of international instability must be addressed. The economic development of its small island members is of the highest priority for the Forum. Increasingly, this calls for attention to the environmental sustainability of the development process, as pressure grows — not least from problems like climate change, which require a concerted international approach — on our small, fragile marine and terrestrial ecosystems.

A major factor in the Forum's decision to seek observer status at the General Assembly was the growing role of the United Nations in addressing sustainable-development issues. Forum countries have participated actively in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development at Rio de Janeiro and its follow-up, in the Commission on Sustainable Development, in the negotiations on climate change and so on. These are areas where we look forward to a continuing increase in the role of the United Nations.

On this note, let me conclude by joining previous speakers in congratulating the United Nations on its achievements and by stating that the countries of the South Pacific Forum are united in their support for the United Nations ideals and activities. We look forward to its next 50 years.

59. Caribbean Community

Address by
H.E. Mr. Edwin Carrington, Secretary-General

It is my signal honour as Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to be afforded the opportunity to address this body on the historic occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. I should like to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and, through him, to the United Nations, for this privilege.

Today, 50 years following the signing of the Charter creating the United Nations, the Organization still represents mankind's greatest hope for peace, development and international cooperation. Indeed, as the United Nations celebrates this milestone anniversary, it has much to be proud of, particularly in the promotion of peace and security, democracy and human rights, economic and social development, the rights of women, the rights of children and justice throughout the world.

In the field of economic and social development the United Nations has been the source of much of the vision and inspiration for the formation of the institutional arrangements and mechanisms which have facilitated the development of the emerging nations of the post-war era. The Caribbean Community is a grouping of such nations. Although it represents a mere 13 of the United Nations 185 Members and an even smaller proportion of its peoples, CARICOM has been an active contributor to the fulfilment of the ideals of the Organization. Strategically located between North and South America and historically linked to Europe, Africa and Asia, CARICOM is a virtual microcosm of our global community. Its fundamental objective of enhancing the economic, social and cultural development of its peoples through regional cooperation, consultation and coordination in an environment of democratic practice and respect for human rights makes CARICOM's mission an integral part of the overall purpose of the United Nations.

Of particular significance to the States members of the Caribbean Community has been the contribution of the United Nations to recognizing the equal sovereign status of nations while promoting the special needs of the least developed and small nation States. The unanimous selection, for example, of one of our nationals to preside for the first time over a session of the General Assembly, its forty-eighth, and the convening in one of our member States of the highly significant United Nations Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States were recent and invaluable demonstrations of this recognition, which also afforded CARICOM the welcome opportunity to be of further service to the international community.

As the United Nations prepares for the future on the very eve of a new century, and, indeed, a new millennium, it is challenged to play an even more decisive role in our rapidly changing political, economic and cultural landscape. To do so, the United Nations will without doubt need to be reformed to provide, particularly, for more equitable representation and decision-making. The Secretary-General's proposals in "An Agenda for Peace" and "An Agenda for Development" offer an encouraging platform from which the United Nations can seek to launch its efforts to meet the challenges of the future and fulfil the highest aspirations of its membership.

We in the Caribbean Community stand ready to play our part, particularly through intensified cooperation with the United Nations, sensitive as we are to the importance of its contribution to the improvement of the human condition in our Community, a condition threatened by poverty, unemployment, degradation of the environment, narco-trafficking and the vagaries of nature.

CARICOM has long been firmly of the view that the response to these challenges lies in great measure in regional and international cooperation. For this reason, our member States have, over the past 22 years, sought through these means to advance and improve the standard of life of the peoples of our small, vulnerable economies and societies. The experience gained, although at times daunting, has nevertheless strengthened our conviction and resolve to intensify our efforts at such cooperation.

It is this conviction that led us recently to enlarge the hitherto English-speaking Caribbean Community to include Suriname, a Dutch-speaking country. It is this conviction that led us to broaden our horizons for regional cooperation through the recent establishment of the Association of Caribbean States, membership of which is open to all the States, countries and Territories of the Caribbean basin.

It is this same conviction that has led us to seek and obtain from the United Nations a commitment for closer cooperation, a recent demonstration of which was the adoption in October 1991 of General Assembly resolution 46/8, granting observer status to the Caribbean Community, and it is this same conviction of the value and efficacy of regional and international cooperation that reenforces the faith of the Caribbean Community, particularly as a grouping of small nation States, in the United Nations and its future.

We in CARICOM are therefore proud to add our voice to that of the international community in extending congratulations to the United Nations on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary and, in so doing, to pledge our continuing strong support for the ideals and aspirations of the United Nations in the years ahead.

60. Organization of African Unity

Address by
H.E. Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary-General

Fifty years ago the world emerged from the ashes of a devastating war to found the United Nations. It was a world rediscovering its common humanity and destiny after the division, hatred and destruction of the war. In the new Organization, the world saw an opportunity to recreate society, rebuild the bonds of human solidarity, work together, promote understanding and cooperation, correct the wrongs of the past and create a new world order, founded on freedom and justice, in which humanity was at peace with itself and forswore war.

Despite the determination and efforts of the United Nations in the last 50 years, the world has not been without conflict and war, or without injustice, oppression and the doubt which they have at times engendered. As the world has gone through its cyclical changes, the United Nations has seen violence, human suffering, injustice, poverty, racism and wars. In the attempts to respond to its global mission of peace and socio-economic development, the United Nations has applied itself seriously and made a difference to many. In its involvement in the maintenance of international peace and security, in fostering socio-economic development and in promoting human rights, the Organization has made its mark on our global society.

The work of its specialized agencies and programmes has brought development and humanitarian assistance to the more needy of this world. Yes, the United Nations has had its share of difficulties and shortcomings. Yet, notwithstanding these shortcomings and, not least, those difficulties thrust upon it by the limitations and actions of its Member States, it is still an Organization which in its universal character embodies the world's peoples, who are yearning to embrace each other in a partnership of understanding and cooperation. Thanks to the United Nations, we have witnessed more than human deprivation, suffering and wars; we have also witnessed human generosity, compassion, courage, gallantry and sacrifice.

Fifty years ago a free Africa, liberated from colonialism and racial bigotry, was only a concept to many and a distant dream even to the optimistic internationalists among those who met in San Francisco to draw up the Charter of our United Nations. To the Organization of African Unity and Africa as a whole, therefore, the United Nations has been an instrument of liberation. Today Africa is free and apartheid has been relegated to history, thanks, to a great extent, to the joint struggle coming from within the United Nations. In the United Nations, the world's opposition to colonialism and racism found convergence and a concrete expression of global partnership for change. That partnership made the difference, and the liberation of Africa is a reality we now live.

As Africa now faces the future, one in which the challenge of human development is growing ever more urgent, we shall continue to need the solidarity and support of the United Nations. To sustain that spirit of global human solidarity inherent in the United Nations system, we must renew our confidence in this Organization, overcome our doubts and defeat some Member States' sentiments of isolation, which now seem to be slowly undermining the spirit of internationalism embodied in the United Nations.

Equally, as we face the future, Africa being mainly a continent of small and developing countries, we see the continent as one with the United Nations in the global search for equality and peace and in promoting human development. In this world which has more often than not tended to gravitate towards the unilateralism of the powerful, Africa can only continue to find security in the collective of the United Nations.

The new changes which have taken place in the world system are presenting new challenges. The United Nations is being tested, and it has to adjust. But for it to do so effectively, its Member States must renew their faith in our shared humanity. To strengthen the United Nations, bridges of cooperation and understanding must span the full breadth of this globe. We must rekindle the spirit of the founding fathers.

This is a celebration of global solidarity and cooperation. It is a commemoration of half a century of partnership between the peoples of the world. We therefore need to take stock of the past 50 years, assess our achievements, weigh our failures and reflect so that we can forge ahead. This is also an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to the ideals of the United Nations, to renew our faith in the Organization and to pledge to it our undivided political and resource support so that it can effectively face the daunting challenges of peace and human development as we enter the next millennium.

61. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Address by
H.E. Dr. Wilhelm Höynck, Secretary-General

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) gladly accepted the invitation to take part in these celebrations, and it is a great honour for me to speak on behalf of the OSCE.

Five decades is a long life for an international organization. The very fact that we can celebrate this anniversary today is evidence of the strength of the United Nations.

Looking into the future, we need the United Nations even more than in the past. In spite of setbacks, disappointments and shortcomings, there are encouraging and even inspiring signs indicating further progress towards worldwide cooperative and comprehensive security.

Such progress cannot be achieved without the United Nations. We need a United Nations which can fulfil the tasks assigned to it in the Charter — as we understand the Charter today — on the basis of 50 years' experience.

The problem-solving potential of the United Nations depends almost entirely on the support it receives from its Member States. It is the contributions of Member States which make the United Nations credible, strong and effective.

We live in one world, rendered ever more closely connected by our indivisible destinies. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other organizations in its region are willing to make their contribution to a lasting and peaceful order from Vancouver to Vladivostok. As regional organizations become able to assume the tasks assigned to them in the Charter, the United Nations will become stronger. Regional action will alleviate the burden that has proved to be too heavy for the United Nations. This will

> "contribute to a deeper sense of participation, consensus and democratization in international affairs". *(A/47/277, para. 64)*

On this we all agree, but we still have to find better ways of achieving mutually reinforcing cooperation. We must improve our ability to allocate tasks according to comparative advantages.

The situation in the world today requires an ever more closely interlocking network of international organizations in which the United Nations must have a special place. Only with such a network will we be able to cope with the challenges confronting us. We should give further thought to how we can integrate non-governmental organizations more effectively into such a network. Through non-governmental organizations, responsible citizens, in particular young people, participate in the difficult task of peace-building. Let us engage their specific operational capabilities and their dedication.

Efforts to strengthen the management and to streamline the structures of the United Nations are just one aspect of the tasks confronting the community of nations. These efforts will succeed only if they are rooted in our faith in fundamental human rights and freedoms and in the dignity of the human being. These common values were the beacon of hope that the founding fathers of the United Nations wanted to establish in the aftermath of crimes against humanity and a devastating war. As we know today, the light of this beacon, despite all the efforts that have been made, has not been strong enough to illuminate expanding areas of darkness.

This is not the fault of those who have served the United Nations in the 50 years of its existence. It has had dedicated men and women who served it. Some of them gave their lives. Dag Hammarskjöld was one of them. He lived, worked and died as a servant of peace. If that outstanding Secretary-General could speak to us today, he might repeat what he said 35 years ago:

> "Working at the edge of the development of human society is to work on the brink of the unknown. Much of what is done will one day prove to have been of little avail. That is no excuse for the failure to act in accordance with our best understanding, in recognition of its limits but with faith in the ultimate result of the creative evolution in which it is our privilege to cooperate."

62. Latin American Economic System

Address by

H.E. Dr. Carlos Moneta, Permanent Secretary

[*Delivered in Spanish*]

It is an honour for the Latin American Economic System (SELA) to participate through the Permanent Secretary in this special session of the General Assembly.

Clearly, the balance sheet for these 50 years of United Nations activities is positive in connection with the objective of the maintenance of international peace and security. But there still exist serious areas of tension and conflict which require more resolute action by the system. Moreover, there must be greater democratization in the decision-making process within the Security Council.

Unfortunately, we do not find the same favourable balance sheet in the field of economic and social development. The effectiveness of the Economic and Social Council has constantly diminished. While an important contribution in sectoral areas has been made by the specialized agencies, the United Nations as such has still not succeeded in gaining enough support to agree on effective policies binding the entire international community to a serious effort of development. Rather, we are seeing the erosion of international cooperation and a dwindling of United Nations presence in debates and decisions on international economic relations and the promotion of sustainable development with social equity.

This process of exclusion is exacerbated by policies aimed at keeping the United Nations apart from economic themes. Latin America and the Caribbean, as indicated by SELA's Latin American Council at its last meeting, does not share this view because it would be a serious limitation of the objectives for which the organization was established. In addition, it would remove the indispensable underpinnings of action in the field of international peace and security. Peace and development are one and any intention to separate them would lead the world to even more serious conflict.

Moreover, the growing globalization of the world economy and the parallel process of regionalism require that developing countries make an ever greater effort to effectively join the global market. As was reflected in the recent World Summit for Social Development, our countries must respond to a two-fold challenge to grow and modernize it and, at the same time, resolve the serious and potentially explosive social debt characterized by the considerable expansion of poverty and marginalization.

In this context, Latin America and the Caribbean have been making major efforts to achieve productive change with equity. Similarly, Latin America and the Caribbean firmly intend to reaffirm their identity and diversity in the emerging new international order. And for this we are developing our regional processes of consultation, cooperation and open integration. Globalization and regionalism do not, in any way, mean accepting without any discussion one homogenizing model, but, rather, exploring valid alternatives where, with our own cultural identity, we can incorporate the valuable experience of our members with those of other parts of the world. The United Nations is the best place for an exchange of views leading to a new world order respectful of diversity in the framework of the so-called global village.

We look forward to the negotiations on the establishment in the framework of the United Nations, of an agenda for development. We believe that, together with the adoption of effective measures for international cooperation, to put into practice the commitments adopted at the World Summit for Social Development, "An Agenda for Development" represents an exceptional opportunity for the United Nations again to play its central role in articulating a global vision of international economic relations and world development. This vision, of course, should include, as a matter of priority, the views of the developing countries. It should also lead to agreement on policy guidelines and concrete commitments in the field of international cooperation, the responsibility for which today resides mainly with the international financial and monetary institutions.

I would like to express SELA's great appreciation SELA for its cooperation with the United Nations and specialized agencies. Special mention should be made of the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the activities of the Permanent Secretary of SELA to benefit the 27 States members of the System, both through the regional programme and the UNDP Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries.

A contemporary French philosopher said that some men turn action into ideas, while others turn ideas into action. Let us pool our efforts so that, through the United Nations, we may be enabled — in accordance with the Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations that has just been adopted — to carry out this task together.

63. Organization of American States

Address by
H.E. Mr. César Gaviria, Secretary-General

[Delivered in Spanish]

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations has mobilized the entire world. Leaders from every corner of the Earth have come to this forum to pay tribute to five decades of achievement benefiting peace, development and well-being. The American hemisphere could not be absent from this tribute, which is why, as Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS), I wish to express to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali and, through him, to the United Nations the support of the people of the Americas.

Our continent, which is today united by the values of democracy and freedom, regards the United Nations as the most appropriate and effective instrument to further the collective aspirations of mankind. During these three days many have mentioned the successes of the past. We should like to join in this recognition of half a century of activity and success. Seeing it in perspective, we are impressed by how much has been achieved, but it has not been an easy road for the United Nations. Keeping alive the ideal of a common destiny in a world divided by apparently irreconcilable hatred is perhaps the Organization's main contribution.

Despite being frequently on the brink of the precipice, mankind, thanks to the United Nations, has retained its faith in certain shared ideals. These walls, even at the darkest moments, have nurtured the dream of a world united and at peace.

Many have also mentioned that this is a good time to pause and look to the future. It is necessary to do so, not only because this commemoration is an appropriate occasion, but also because there has never been a more auspicious time for the promotion of collective action and multilateralism. The main challenges that affect the world community today cannot be overcome unless we pool the determination of all nations. Poverty and hunger, environmental degradation, international organized crime, arms trafficking, the violation of human rights, terrorism, the arms build-up and nuclear proliferation are examples of the challenges that transcend frontiers.

In a world without the threat of the cold war, the preservation of peace and collective security are no longer the responsibility of a few but have become an obligation of all. Only with States' vigorous participation in and commitment to the United Nations and the other regional and global multilateral institutions will it be possible to find the solutions that the global agenda requires. Those who today support a policy isolationism and non-involvement in world affairs, because of a myopic conception of national interests, are sowing uncertainty as to world stability and peace. Clinging to a mistaken sense of fiscal frugality, some would like to save a few cents at the cost of sacrificing the viability of a new international order.

In saying this, I do not mean that it is not essential to undertake a profound review and reform of the United Nations and all the other international organizations in order to root out inefficiency, cut away whatever is superfluous and bring their activities into line with the priorities of the Member countries. In the Organization of American States, as in the United Nations, we are already doing this. But we cannot allow those who, frequently alone, have shouldered the ideal of a world at peace to fade away from lack of support precisely when the dream is finally within reach.

There are those who selfishly seek to argue that, in a world where strategic confrontation has ceased to exist, the powerful can allow themselves the luxury of forgetting the deaths elsewhere. Since there is no enemy, they say, there is no longer any threat. How mistaken they are. The threat is no longer communism but, rather, the spectre of the wars of the past, in which ancestral hatred, territorial ambition and atavistic fear could unleash boundless catastrophe. The threat is no longer capitalism but, rather, an unresolved agenda of urgent global problems.

For this reason we owe congratulations to Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin, who, inspired by the spirit of the United Nations and this celebration, have risen above what is described in their countries as parochialism or nationalism for the sake of the huge potential in well-being and peace that multilateral cooperation can achieve.

I should like to conclude by making an appeal. Let us ensure that when the euphoria of this celebration dissipates, the constructive spirit that can be felt in the international climate today will remain, so that the United Nations becomes the setting where the hope for a better world is translated into reality. Let us see to it that in 50 years' time, when our words are just a distant historical record, this anniversary will be remembered as the beginning of a new era.

64. Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee

Address by
H.E. Mr. Tang Chengyuan, Secretary-General

On behalf of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee, I have the honour and privilege to offer felicitations to you, Sir, on your election to the high office of the presidency of this Assembly and to express our profound gratitude for the manner in which you have presided at this Special Commemorative Meeting.

It is a matter of honour and pride for me, on behalf of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee, to address the distinguished and eminent persons gathered here to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. I should like to join those speakers who have already congratulated the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and yourself, Sir, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is not synonymous with the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. Indeed it is more.

To look back on and address the question of 50 years of the United Nations is to consider the process of the institutionalization of international cooperation in our system, in which the geographical, physical, biological and economic processes are interrelated. The work of the United Nations to date has not only shown us that institutionalized cooperation is possible and workable, but has also amply demonstrated that, in the interdependent but fragile environment of contemporary international society, cooperation is more than ever necessary as a multitude of demographic, economic, environmental, political, technological and criminal factors overwhelm State decision-makers.

An overview of the institutional cooperation forged by this universal institution reveals far greater areas of progress and effective, cooperative action through the work of the Organization than the popular impression would appear to indicate. Over the years, the peoples of the United Nations,

> "determined to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours",

have, *inter alia*, reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights. They have acknowledged that climate is the common concern of mankind, declared the seabed and ocean floor beyond the national jurisdiction of States to be the common heritage of mankind, and resolved to use outer space for the common benefit of mankind.

The spectacular results attained in the speeding of Trust Territories and non-self-governing Territories to full nationhood, and the current near-universal membership of the Organization, represent another achievement of this institution. These are among the salient factors that, *inter alia*, underscore the institution's commitment to the cause of maintaining international peace and security. The Secretary-General's recommendations in his "An Agenda for Peace" reinforce the principles of the non-use of force in international relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes. The end of the cold war and the dissipation of the East-West conflict that it characterized have ushered in a new era of peace and development.

The achievements and successful undertakings of the United Nations and its organs stem in part from according due respect to the obligations arising from international law. The Organization has taken appropriate steps to ensure the observance of the rule of law in international relations and the progressive development of international law and its codification through resolutions, declarations and codification conferences. Consensus-building in the codification of international law is by nature a time-consuming and complex process, but the spirit of cooperation kindled by the Organization has kept the international legislative draughtsman and lawyers totally preoccupied, in particular during the ongoing United Nations Decade of International Law.

Over the years, the AALCC has made its modest contribution to the attainment of the objectives and principles relevant to its sphere of competence. I should like, on behalf of the AALCC, to extend to the General Assembly my assurances that the Committee will continue to work to support the activities of the United Nations and to cooperate towards the prevalence of the rule of law in international relations.

65. Economic Cooperation Organization

Address by

H.E. Mr. Shamshad Ahmad, Secretary-General

I deem it a great privilege and an honour to be representing the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) at this historic event. As almost everyone who has spoken over the past three days has said, this is indeed a welcome opportunity for us not only to look back in retrospect on the 50 years of the United Nations, but also to reflect on its future in the light of the new dynamics propelling today's dramatically changed world.

With the end of the cold war, the international community is faced with new realities that have altered the fundamentals of global relations, necessitating bold and innovative approaches to the fulfilment of the ideals that inspired the establishment of the United Nations. In this task, regional arrangements, political or economic, are assuming a crucial role as instruments of peace and development. The Economic Cooperation Organization is one such major regional organization. It comprises 10 member States, all sharing common bonds of history and a collective vision for a future of progress and prosperity. Devoted solely to the socio-economic well-being of its member States, ECO is playing a pivotal role in the stability of a vast region in Asia's heartland.

As the Executive Head of that organization, I avail myself of this opportunity to renew, on behalf of the ECO member States, their full commitment to and support of the purposes and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. ECO is an outward-looking organization ready to work and cooperate with every country, region and international organization in pursuit of global peace, harmony and sustainable economic development. We support the efforts of the United Nations and its Secretary-General to remove the causes of conflict and distress in all parts of the world.

Today, the "iron curtain" is no longer there, but a "poverty curtain" still divides the international community into two unequal worlds, one embarrassingly rich and the other desperately poor. We certainly need a just, fair and equitable economic order free of discriminatory and protectionist walls. It is in this direction that the United Nations should focus its attention in the coming years.

The international community must develop new patterns of collaboration on the basis of equality, partnership, interdependence and mutuality of benefit. Let us all work together and bring the United Nations into conformity with the role that it is required to play to lead us and succeeding generations into the new millennium with peace and honour.

66. Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean

Address by
H.E. Mr. Enrique Román-Morey, Secretary-General

[Delivered in Spanish]

The signing of the Charter of the United Nations 50 years ago in San Francisco was surely this century's most important event for mankind. It represented the ongoing desire of international society to put an end to war.

We must recognize that the Charter of the United Nations was not the first world-wide attempt to achieve lasting peace. It was, however, the most complete one of its time. Susceptible, like all human activities of improvement, the Organization was subsequently marked by conflict between the great Powers and the needs of the small ones. For decades before and after San Francisco, theoreticians of international relations saw global policy in terms of conflict. The ideological frame of reference during that time enabled the strong to do whatever they liked and obliged the weak to do whatever they could.

In February 1967, nearly 22 years after the signing of the Charter of the United Nations, Latin America and the Caribbean, at the core of the cold war without being part of it, gave mankind the example of the Treaty of Tlatelolco for the prohibition of nuclear weapons, which established the intergovernmental organization that I have the honour to represent, the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin American and the Caribbean (OPANAL), and which created the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in the world in keeping with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Treaty of Tlatelolco is a unique, incomparable Treaty in many respects, but, above all, it is the oldest one of its kind because it pre-dates the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and goes beyond it in banning nuclear weapons. In addition, it is the first disarmament treaty which was signed and ratified by the five acknowledged nuclear Powers, respecting the wishes of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean and guaranteeing their status. It should also be emphasized that the Treaty of Tlatelolco recognizes that nuclear-weapon-free zones are not an end in themselves, but rather a means to achieve the subsequent stage: general and complete disarmament.

Allow me to recall what then-Secretary-General U Thant said:

"It is easy to see the magnitude of the obstacles that block progress in the field of disarmament and arms control, which is so complicated and frustrating. But these same difficulties enhance the merit and the significance of what you have achieved. In a world that too often appears obscure and ominous, the Treaty of Tlatelolco will shine like a beacon."

Secretary-General U Thant was not mistaken. This year, in 1995, 28 years after being opened for signature, the Treaty of Tlatelolco has become universal, having been signed by all 33 States which are members of the Latin American and Caribbean region — as the best fiftieth birthday gift for the United Nations.

Understanding that there are only two ways of establishing and putting into force a legal order in international relations, namely either through force or through consensus, our region chose the latter through negotiation and conciliation of positions — which was not always easy to do. Consensus is the harmonization of desires, and in the political field the harmonization of desires means balance among the parties, based on the lack of coercion, legal equality of States, free determination of peoples, non-intervention in internal affairs, respect for treaties freely agreed to, peaceful settlement of disputes and cooperation for the common benefit. All of this means, in turn, the clear and definite renunciation of the threat or use of force. All of these principles, while not always fully respected, have made the United Nations great by making it necessary for the maintenance of world peace and for the promotion of the social and economic development of peoples.

The need to faithfully respect all of these principles, all of which are embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, in the Treaty of Tlatelolco and in most of the other international instruments that govern us, highlights the primacy of multilateralism as an essential element in relations among nations of the world. But let us recall that this primacy can be achieved only through the firm political will of the States parties to reach agreement related to the firm commitment to respect what they have committed themselves to. In other words, there is a legal commitment that binds parties to the letter of agreement, and a moral commitment that binds them to its spirit.

Fortunately, only rarely has the United Nations been harshly criticized; sometimes for having been ineffective in dealing with problems where ideological confrontations or clashes of interests were visible. Rarely, also, has there been praise for the immense benefits the international community has enjoyed under the Organization's management, such as peace-keeping operations or the countless funds allocated to Member States that need technical and economic assistance. This is why the current financial crisis being experienced by international organizations, and, of course, by other organizations such as OPANAL, is regrettable, incomprehensible and unacceptable. Let us remember that the commitment of parties is not only legal, but also moral, and that only the parties to international treaties themselves can determine their strength, their endurance and their successful management. We believe that it is time to give serious thought to the latter aspect before the lack of cash erodes the foundations of one of the greatest ideas produced by mankind.

For a world free of nuclear tests; for a world free of nuclear weapons: from this rostrum, as Secretary-General of OPANAL, I congratulate the United Nations. I pay tribute to the citizens of the world who enhance it. On behalf of the regional organization I represent, I wish the United Nations every success in its invaluable endeavours. Only the efforts of its Members can ensure this success.

67. Latin American Parliament

Address by
H.E. Senator Humberto Celli Gerbasi, President

[*Delivered in Spanish*]

We are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, a body which has carried out important work benefiting the international community and its main component, the individual. When the United Nations was formed in San Francisco, on 26 June 1945, the world saw the challenges and objectives that the young Organization had to face — to protect the world from war and to foster peace and security; to promote economic and social progress; and to define and protect the rights and freedoms of every human being without distinction as to race, language or religion.

The United Nations has made a great effort to attain its objectives. However, we have witnessed armed conflict in many parts of the world. These conflicts have not only taken millions of lives, but they have also left very serious economic and social consequences.

The Latin American Parliament has established its position on the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the irreparable damage they cause to people and to the environment, but we have just seen two countries — France and China — permanent members of the Security Council of this Organization, detonate deadly devices, disregarding the outcry of the people of the world against them, disregarding people and their habitat as well as the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The problem of the external debt continues to strangle the developing countries, requiring greater and greater sacrifices on the part of their citizens. For 20 years the Latin American countries, and many developing countries in Africa and Asia, have been making efforts to export savings to cope with external debt servicing. This has created problems such as the exacerbation of poverty and has led to the difficulties that these countries are facing in the functioning and modernization of their production equipment and social infrastructure.

The amount of the overall external debt of the developing countries as of 31 December 1994 was $1.6 trillion. It is therefore of the utmost importance for the peaceful development of international relations to define the legal framework for regulating the general principles of conventional law, in terms of obligations, and those of modern international law, and for this purpose the competent body is the International Court of Justice in The Hague. This is a good opportunity to emphasize the importance of having the General Assembly of the United Nations request the International Court of Justice in The Hague, in the exercise of its advisory competence, to specify the necessary legal principles with respect to external debt, which are essential to the achievement of justice and to the preservation of peace among peoples.

New terms of understanding must be created, and a code of conduct should be established. As a temporary, immediate measure, it should be recommended — and this Organization could cooperate in this respect — that interest on the external debt be calculated in terms of its real value, which is 40 per cent lower on the secondary market.

Another very important element that affects the public interests of our country is corruption. It is therefore necessary to emphasize that the ninety-fourth conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, held in Bucharest, Romania, from 4 to 14 October this year, adopted by acclamation a resolution on parliamentary action to combat corruption and on the need for international cooperation. This document sets forth the national and international steps that should be taken to eliminate this world-wide scourge.

At the close of the twentieth century, the prospects for the developing countries are not very encouraging. We feel that there should be an ethical obligation to allow for the economic growth and social development of all nations, one in which there are no exploiters and no exploited and in which freedom, peace, harmony and social justice prevail.

We wish to begin the twenty-first century with clear, open and equitable prospects for all. We believe that in the next millennium, our descendants will inherit a hospitable planet, capable of perpetuating the human race in dignity and honour.

68. Central American Integration System

Address by
H.E. Dr. Julio Icaza Gallard,
Director of Functional Integration
at the General Secretariat

[*Delivered in Spanish*]

The Central American Integration System (CAIS) congratulates the United Nations on this historic occasion, which happens to coincide exactly with the granting to our organization of Observer status.

Our organization of the six States of the Central American isthmus has as one of its fundamental underpinnings respect for the principles and norms of the Charter of the United Nations and of the Organization of American States (OAS), which demonstrates that our system-wide subregional nature binds us firmly with the regional system and with the global system represented by the United Nations.

Accordingly, the new era that this commemoration is ushering in — this new era of peace, democracy and cooperation, to which the United Nations must adapt — is, for the Central American Integration System, a global example that we, as a Central American organization, have begun to follow, through the coordination of all of our regional integration organs and institutions in order that we might become a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development.

The current recognition, in the United Nations, of the fact that worldwide peace, security and stability can be achieved only if the economic and social needs of peoples are met is shared by the Central American Integration System, whose concept of development is integrated in such a way as to tackle simultaneously, in a harmonious, balanced way, the economic, social, cultural, political and environmental spheres. Central America's historical experience reveals the indissoluble relationship of all these sectoral aspects of development. It is therefore necessary for their respective agendas to be viewed as the integral and harmonious parts of a single whole.

That is why our new model of Central American democratic security, to which we are giving concrete expression through the negotiation of a treaty on this very important matter, seeks precisely to protect and promote this kind of central, integrated development, which focuses on the human being, on the men and women who live in Central America.

We also welcome the consensus that has emerged as the result of the activities of the United Nations on the concepts of sustained economic growth and sustainable development. Central America has, for its part, defined its concept of sustainable development as a process of gradual change in the quality of life of human beings, centred on the individual as the primary focus of development, through economic growth with social equity and through the transformation of production methods and consumption patterns, a process based on the ecological balance and necessary support of the region. This process requires respect for regional, national and local ethnic and cultural diversity, as well as the strengthening of peaceful coexistence through the full participation of citizens, in harmony with nature and without compromise, so as to guarantee the quality of life of succeeding generations.

In Central America, sustainable development represents an integrated approach to development that requires simultaneous efforts, and needs progress to be made on the path towards democracy, social and cultural development, sustainable economic development and the sustainable management of natural resources, and improvements in the quality of the environment.

It is evident that the changes foreshadowed here on this anniversary within the 185 States which today are Members of the United Nations have begun to be felt in the Central American isthmus in the context of the Central American Integration System, our Central American organization, so that this historic decision of the Heads of State and Government and the heads of delegations of Member States of the United Nations to redirect the United Nations so that it better serves mankind, particularly those who suffer and lack basic needs, will be supported and followed with particular attention by our organization, given the desire to have, in the twenty-first century, a United Nations equipped and structured to serve effectively the causes of peace, development, equality and justice.

III. Adoption of the Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations

A. Statement

by the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, H.E. Ambassador Richard Butler, AM, Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations

It is an honour for me, Sir, to serve under your presidency.

I now report to the General Assembly as Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations. As one of the inventors of the five-minute rule, I will be brief: I will make only five points.

First, in all of our work we have been assisted by an utterly superb Secretariat of the United Nations and I want this to be heard in particular outside this Hall. I am thinking especially of Mrs. Sorensen and her fiftieth anniversary Secretariat team. Secondly, this international community has agreed on the text of a Declaration for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. It is the text in document A/50/48. Thirdly, we have discharged our responsibility. We have produced a Declaration which reaffirms the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and our commitments to them. We have produced a Declaration, a text on the future, which will have meaning for the peoples of this world. Fourthly, this is a document that will serve us well, in particular through its guidelines for future cooperation amongst all nations. And, fifthly, in itself this Declaration represents a major act of cooperation. I will always be grateful for having been able to be a part of its creation. I thank all of you deeply for your hard work and for your friendship.

I commend to the Assembly this Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations.

The Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations was adopted by acclamation.

B. Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations [Resolution 50/6]

The General Assembly

Adopts the following Declaration:

Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations

Fifty years ago the United Nations was born out of the sufferings caused by the Second World War. The determination, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" is as vital today as it was fifty years ago. In this, as in other respects, the Charter gives expression to the common values and aspirations of humankind.

The United Nations has been tested by conflict, humanitarian crisis and turbulent change, yet it has survived and played an important role in preventing another global conflict and has achieved much for people all over the world. The United Nations has helped to shape the very structure of relations between nations in the modern age. Through the process of decolonization and the elimination of apartheid, hundreds of millions of human beings have been and are assured the exercise of the fundamental right of self-determination.

At this time, following the end of the cold war, and as the end of the century approaches, we must create new opportunities for peace, development, democracy and cooperation. The speed and extent of change in today's world point to a future of great complexity and challenge and to a sharp increase in the level of expectations of the United Nations.

Our resolve on this historic occasion is clear. The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations must be seized as an opportunity to redirect it to greater service to humankind, especially to those who are suffering and are deeply deprived. This is the practical and moral challenge of our time. Our obligation to this end is found in the Charter. The need for it is manifest in the condition of humankind.

On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we, the Member States and observers of the United Nations, representing the peoples of the world:

- Solemnly reaffirm the Purposes and Principles of the Charter of the United Nations and our commitments to them;

- Express our gratitude to all men and women who have made the United Nations possible, done its work and served its ideals, particularly those who have given their lives during service to the United Nations;
- Are determined that the United Nations of the future will work with renewed vigour and effectiveness in promoting peace, development, equality and justice and understanding among the peoples of the world;
- Will give to the twenty-first century a United Nations equipped, financed and structured to serve effectively the peoples in whose name it was established.

In fulfilment of these commitments we will be guided in our future cooperation by the following, with respect to peace, development, equality, justice and the United Nations Organization:

Peace

1. To meet these challenges, and while recognizing that action to secure global peace, security and stability will be futile unless the economic and social needs of people are addressed, we will:

- Promote methods and means for the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and enhance the capabilities of the United Nations in conflict prevention, preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping and peace-building;
- Strongly support United Nations, regional and national efforts on arms control, limitation and disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, in all aspects, and other weapons of mass destruction, including biological and chemical weapons and other forms of particularly excessively injurious or indiscriminate weapons, in pursuit of our common commitment to a world free of all these weapons;
- Continue to reaffirm the right of self-determination of all peoples, taking into account the particular situation of peoples under colonial or other forms of alien domination or foreign occupation, and recognize the right of peoples to take legitimate action in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations to realize their inalienable right of self-determination. This shall not be construed as authorizing or encouraging any action that would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States conducting themselves in compliance with the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples and thus possessed of a Government representing the whole people belonging to the territory without distinction of any kind;
- Act together to defeat the threats to States and people posed by terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, and transnational organized crime and the illicit trade in arms and the production and consumption of and trafficking in illicit drugs;

- Strengthen consultation and cooperation between regional arrangements or agencies and the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Development

2. A dynamic, vigorous, free and equitable international economic environment is essential to the well-being of humankind and to international peace, security and stability. This objective must be addressed, in greater measure and more effectively, by the United Nations system.

3. The United Nations has played an important role in the promotion of economic and social development and has, over the years, provided life-saving assistance to women, children and men around the world. But the pledge recorded in the Charter that all Members of the United Nations shall take joint and separate action in cooperation with the Organization for the achievement of higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development has not been adequately implemented.

4. It must be recognized that notwithstanding past efforts, the gap between the developed and developing countries remains unacceptably wide. The specific problems of countries with economies in transition with respect to their twofold transition to democracy and a market economy should also be recognized. In addition, accelerating globalization and interdependence in the world economy call for policy measures designed to ensure the maximization of the benefits from and the minimization of the negative effects of these trends for all countries.

5. Of greatest concern is that one fifth of the world's 5.7 billion people live in extreme poverty. Extraordinary measures by all countries, including strengthened international cooperation, are needed to address this and related problems.

6. In response to these facts and circumstances, the United Nations has convened a number of specifically focused global conferences in the last five years. From these conferences, a consensus has emerged, *inter alia*, that economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development, which is the framework of our efforts to achieve a higher quality of life for all people. At the core of this consensus is the recognition that the human person is the central subject of development and that people must be at the centre of our actions towards and concerns for sustainable development.

7. In this context, we reaffirm that democracy, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

8. In order to foster sustained economic growth, social development, environmental protection and social justice in fulfilment of the commitments we have made on international cooperation for development, we will:

- Promote an open and equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system and a framework for investment, transfers of technology and knowledge, as well as enhanced cooperation in the areas of development, finance and debt as critical conditions for development;
- Give particular attention to national and international action to enhance the benefits of the process of globalization for all countries and to avoid the marginalization from and promote the integration of the least developed countries and countries in Africa into the world economy;
- Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations system for development and strengthen its role in all relevant fields of international economic cooperation;
- Invigorate the dialogue and partnership between all countries in order to secure the existence of a favourable political and economic environment for the promotion of international cooperation for development based on the imperatives of mutual benefit and interest and genuine interdependence, while recognizing that each country is ultimately responsible for its own development but reaffirming that the international community must create a supportive international environment for such development;
- Promote social development through decisive national and international action aimed at the eradication of poverty as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of humankind and the promotion of full employment and social integration;
- Recognize that the empowerment and the full and equal participation of women is central to all efforts to achieve development;
- Reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and promote appropriate demographic policies in order to meet the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, recognizing that environmental sustainability constitutes an integral part of the development process;
- Intensify cooperation on natural disaster reduction and major technological and man-made disasters, disaster relief, post-disaster rehabilitation and humanitarian assistance in order to enhance the capabilities of affected countries to cope with such situations.

Equality

9. We reiterate the affirmation by the Charter of the dignity and worth of the human person and the equal rights of men and women and reaffirm that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated.

10. While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of all States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, the universal nature of which is beyond question. It is also important for all States to ensure the universality, objectivity and non-selectivity of the consideration of human rights issues.

11. We will therefore:

- Promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, which are inherent to all human beings;
- Strengthen laws, policies and programmes that would ensure the full and equal participation of women in all spheres of political, civil, economic, social and cultural life as equal partners and the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women;
- Promote and protect the rights of the child;
- Ensure that the rights of persons who can be particularly vulnerable to abuse or neglect, including youth, persons with disabilities, the elderly and migrant workers, are protected;
- Promote and protect the rights of indigenous people;
- Ensure the protection of the rights of refugees and of displaced persons;
- Ensure that the rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic and other minorities are protected, and that such persons are able to pursue economic and social development and live in circumstances of full respect for their identity, traditions, forms of social organization and cultural and religious values.

Justice

12. The Charter of the United Nations has provided a durable framework for the promotion and development of international law. The continued promotion and development of international law must be pursued with a view to ensuring that relations between States are based on the principles of justice, sovereign equality, universally recognized principles of international law and respect for the rule of law. Such action should take account of developments under way in such areas as technology, transport, information and resource-related fields and international financial markets, as well as the growing complexity of the work of the United Nations in the humanitarian and refugee assistance fields.

13. We are determined to:

- Build and maintain justice among all States in accordance with the principles of the sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States;
- Promote full respect for and implementation of international law;
- Settle international disputes by peaceful means;

- Encourage the widest possible ratification of international treaties and ensure compliance with the obligations arising from them;
- Promote respect for and the implementation of international humanitarian law;
- Promote the progressive development of international law in the field of development, including that which would foster economic and social progress;
- Promote respect for and implementation of international law in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms and encourage ratification of or accession to international human rights instruments;
- Promote the further codification and progressive development of international law.

United Nations Organization

14. In order to be able to respond effectively to the challenges of the future and the expectations of the United Nations held by peoples around the world, it is essential that the United Nations itself be reformed and modernized. The work of the General Assembly, the universal organ of the States Members of the United Nations, should be revitalized. The Security Council should, *inter alia*, be expanded and its working methods continue to be reviewed in a way that will further strengthen its capacity and effectiveness, enhance its representative character and improve its working efficiency and transparency; as important differences on key issues continue to exist, further in-depth consideration of these issues is required. The role of the Economic and Social Council should be strengthened to enable it to carry out effectively, in the modern age, the tasks it has been assigned with respect to the well-being and standards of life of all people. These and other changes, within the United Nations system, should be made if we are to ensure that the United Nations of the future serves well the peoples in whose name it was established.

15. In order to carry out its work effectively, the United Nations must have adequate resources. Member States must meet, in full and on time, their obligation to bear the expenses of the Organization, as apportioned by the General Assembly. That apportionment should be established on the basis of criteria agreed to and considered to be fair by Member States.

16. The secretariats of the United Nations system must improve significantly their efficiency and effectiveness in administering and managing the resources allocated to them. For their part, Member States will pursue and take responsibility for reforming that system.

17. We recognize that our common work will be the more successful if it is supported by all concerned actors of the international community, including non-governmental organizations, multilateral financial institutions, regional organizations and all actors of civil society. We will welcome and facilitate such support, as appropriate.

IV. Closing statements

A. Statement

by the Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali

[Delivered in Arabic]

Greetings to you all, at the end of this historic Meeting. Greetings to the leaders of the world.

[Continued in English]

Ladies and gentlemen, you are part of the largest gathering of world leaders in history. Your presence speaks, as you have spoken, with eloquence, of confidence in the future of the United Nations.

One hundred and twenty-nine Heads of State and Government have come to the United Nations to mark its fiftieth anniversary. We have listened to the wisdom of those leaders. Together they have given the world an Agenda for Tomorrow. An Agenda covering every aspect of human society.

Those who made possible this extraordinary event deserve our deepest thanks. To Ambassador Butler and the Preparatory Committee: your work laid the foundation for this successful gathering. And through your work, this Meeting closes with the adoption of a historic Declaration. The States of the world have today reaffirmed the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, and their commitment to them. They have resolved to redirect the United Nations to ever greater service to humanity, especially those most in need.

To the thousands of non-governmental organizations around the world: you have forged a new global partnership with the United Nations through your contribution to this effort. Out of it will come new associations and teaching projects which will vastly strengthen our common action in the future.

Our thanks go also to the Observers from non-Member States and from other organizations; to the heads of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system; to the members of my advisory group on the fiftieth anniversary; to Ms. Sorensen, who has directed UN50; to the Protocol Office; to the many global sponsors of this event; and to our permanent host, the City of New York.

On behalf of the United Nations, I express my appreciation to Mayor Giuliani, Commissioner Sylva, the New York Police Department and the people of New York City, for their patience, cooperation and warm welcome. To our host nation, the United States of America, and its many departments, we send our admiration and thanks.

None of this could have been achieved without the dedication and tireless efforts of the United Nations staff: the fiftieth anniversary secretariat; the staff of Conference Services; of General Assembly Affairs; the interpretation and translation services; the security personnel; the staff in the Department of Public Information, and many, many more. All are living, shining examples of the United Nations and its ideals — of peoples of the world engaged in service to peoples of the world.

All of this attendance, this dedication, this hard work, show that the United Nations has the support of the citizens of the world and their leaders. I am convinced that together we can enable the United Nations to serve the world of the future.

[*Continued in French*]

During these past three days, the family of nations has been meeting in this house of nations. During these past three days, the dialogue of nations sought by the founding fathers has been taking place in friendship and fraternity.

During these past three days, we have seen the spirit of San Francisco live again. May this spirit guide us during the next 50 years. May we, together, build the "Virtuous Planet" *Al Madina Al Fadila* described by the Arab philosopher Al-Farabi several centuries ago.

[*Continued in Arabic*]

Long live the United Nations!

[*Continued in French*]

Long live the United Nations!

[*Continued in English*]

Long live the United Nations!

B. Statement

by the President of the General Assembly,
H.E. Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral

We have come to the end of this Special Commemorative Meeting of the General Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. I must express my great satisfaction with the fact that it was such a great success, showing the world that a Meeting of this magnitude and importance could be organized so well by the United Nations.

For this success, I should like to thank all the speakers for trying to keep to the necessary time-limit. In addition, I thank the Secretary-General and all the staff and support units, and Ms. Gillian Sorensen, without whom we would have been unable to meet at all.

My gratitude goes also and especially to the staff of the General Assembly.

Last but not least, I should like to thank the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary and its Chairman, Ambassador Richard Butler, whose hard work made it all possible.

[*Continued in French*]

What more eloquent testimony can we find to the merits of our Organization than the presence here in New York of such a large number of Heads of State and Government? They came to celebrate but they also came to meet and to exchange ideas amongst themselves on the future of the United Nations, for this international forum is still the chief framework of international relations. It still formulates the fundamental principles of social and economic conduct. It is the Assembly that unifies the nations of the world. Now and henceforth it must continue its function as catalyst for the progress of mankind.

Since the birth of our Organization 50 years ago, the number of Member countries has more than tripled. Virtually all the countries of the planet have requested and been accepted as Members. As far as we know, none wants to leave. What further proof do we need of the value of the United Nations?

[*Continued in Spanish*]

The many statements made from this rostrum have constantly referred to the ideals of the United Nations — peace and development, human rights, international cooperation. I heard no one defend the practice of war or the refusal of assistance to the least fortunate peoples. Nor did I hear anyone praise the virtues of dictatorship or the advantages of isolationism.

Of course, it is not enough to proclaim ideals. Ideals must be put into practice, but the fact that all the Member States agree on what the common values of the United Nations are means that part of the work has already been done. Now we must work together to agree on the ways of achieving these ideals.

These have not been three days of mere words. We have seen former leaders of war now transformed into leaders of peace, nations that in the past suffered under the power of dictatorship have now become democratic nations and countries formerly isolated have emerged as members of important regional organizations committed to multilateralism.

[*Continued in English*]

Excellencies, all Member States have recognized the need for bold reform. Let the political commitment that has been demonstrated here over the last three days continue in your work at the United Nations and let us now go forth and strengthen our Organization.

Our work has already begun. The many proposals made during this Special Commemorative Meeting are part of the process of reform. Let us keep working together towards a better United Nations. Let us face the urgent financial crisis before us and let us lay down the foundations of a strong, efficient and visionary Organization for the future.

Last night we heard Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and its Ode to Joy. In that magnificent piece of art, joy is said to be based on freedom and brotherhood. Let us then continue to work for peace and development together, in the hope that one day we will find joy in freedom and brotherhood.

I declare closed the Special Commemorative Meeting of the General Assembly on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations.

Annexes

I. Resolution 49/12 B

Organization of the list of speakers for the Special Commemorative Meeting of the General Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 48/215 B of 26 May 1994, in which it decided to convene a special commemorative meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Charter of the United Nations, to be held at United Nations Headquarters from 22 to 24 October 1995,

Recalling also paragraph 8 of the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations,[a] in which the modalities for inviting Palestine and, if they so request, other observers to attend the Special Commemorative Meeting were agreed upon,

1. *Decides* that the Special Commemorative Meeting shall consist of a total of six meetings, on the basis of two meetings a day;

2. *Also decides* that the list of speakers for the Special Commemorative Meeting shall be organized in accordance with the procedure set forth in the annex to the present resolution.

103rd plenary meeting
24 May 1995

Annex

Organization of the list of speakers for the Special Commemorative Meeting of the General Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations

1. The list of speakers for the Special Commemorative Meeting will be established on the basis of six meetings, each meeting having 25 speaking slots, with the exception of the meeting on Tuesday, 24 October 1995, in the afternoon, which will have 60 speaking slots.

2. The first speaker in the Special Commemorative Meeting will be the head of State of the host country of the Organization.

3. The list of speakers for the Special Commemorative Meeting will be initially established as follows:

(*a*) The Secretary-General or his representative will draw one name from a box containing the names of all Member States, observer States and Palestine, in its capacity as observer, participating in the Special Commemorative Meeting. This procedure will be repeated until all names have been drawn from the box, thus establishing the order in which participants will be invited to choose their meetings and select their speaking slots;

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[a] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 48 (A/49/48).*

(*b*) Six boxes will be prepared, each one representing a meeting and each one containing numbers corresponding to speaking slots at that meeting;

(*c*) Once the name of a Member State, observer State or Palestine, in its capacity as observer, has been drawn by the Secretary-General or his representative, that Member State, observer State or Palestine, in its capacity as observer, will be invited to first choose a meeting and then draw from the appropriate box the number indicating the speaking slot in the meeting;

(*d*) A number of speaking slots at each meeting will be reserved for observers participating in the Special Commemorative Meeting. They will be invited to participate in the initial establishment of the list of speakers in the same manner as Member States, observer States and Palestine, in its capacity as observer, but from a different set of six boxes.

4. The establishment of the initial list of speakers for the Special Commemorative Meeting as outlined in paragraph 3 of the present annex will take place at a meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations to be held on 7 June 1995.

5. Subsequently, the list of speakers for each meeting will be rearranged in accordance with the established practice of the General Assembly when organizing each category of speakers, following the order resulting from the selection process outlined in paragraph 3 of the present annex:

(*a*) Heads of State will thus be accorded first priority, followed by vice-presidents, crown princes/princesses, heads of government, the highest ranking official of the Holy See and Switzerland, as observer States, and Palestine, in its capacity as observer, ministers, permanent representatives and other observers;

(*b*) In the event that the level at which a statement is to be made is subsequently changed, the speaker will be moved to the next available speaking slot in the appropriate category at the same meeting;

(*c*) Participants may arrange to exchange their speaking slots in accordance with the established practice of the General Assembly;

(*d*) Speakers who are not present when their speaking turn comes will be automatically moved to the next available speaking slot within their category.

6. In order to accommodate all speakers at the Special Commemorative Meeting, statements should be limited to five minutes, on the understanding that this will not preclude the circulation of more extensive texts.

7. The full text of all speeches provided to the Special Commemorative Meeting will be subsequently published in a bound book.

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Photograph

taken at the opening of the
Special Commemorative Meeting of the
General Assembly on the occasion of the
fiftieth anniversary of the
United Nations

New York, 22 October 1995

United Nations, New York, 22 October 1995

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Republic of Korea

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Philippines

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President Zedillo
Mexico

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President Chissano
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Douglas
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Democratic
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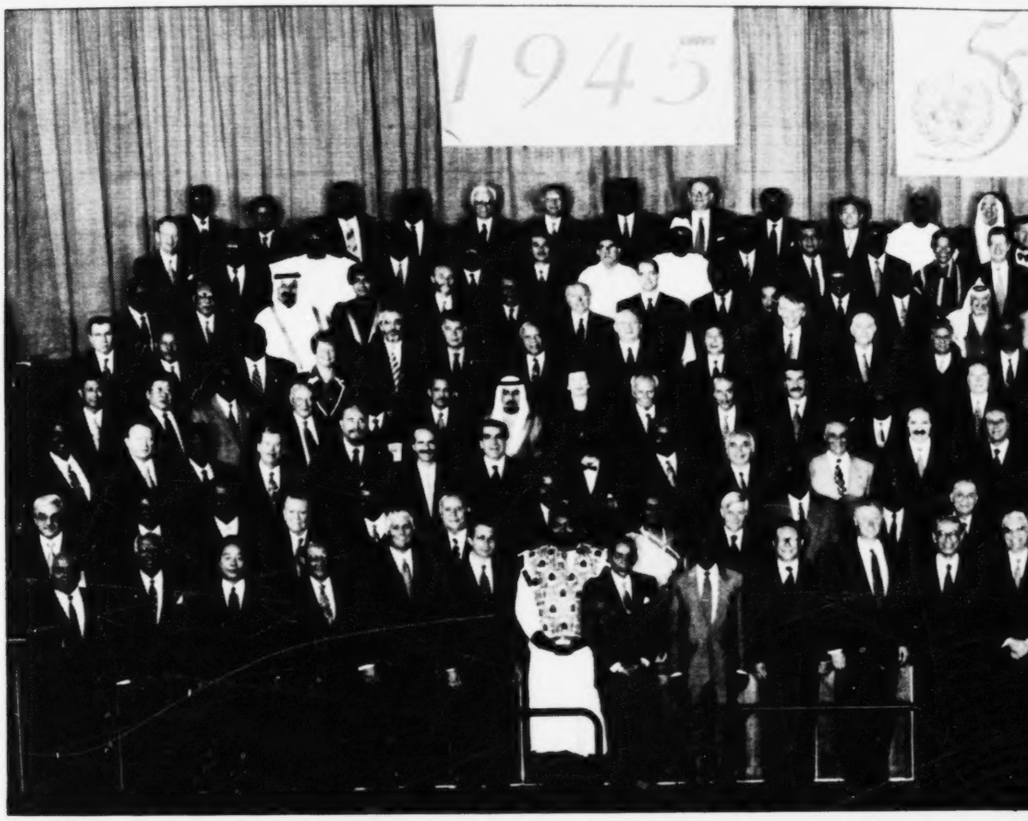
Photograph taken at the opening of the Special Commemorative Meeting of the Gene



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Secretary-General Salim
Organization of African Unity

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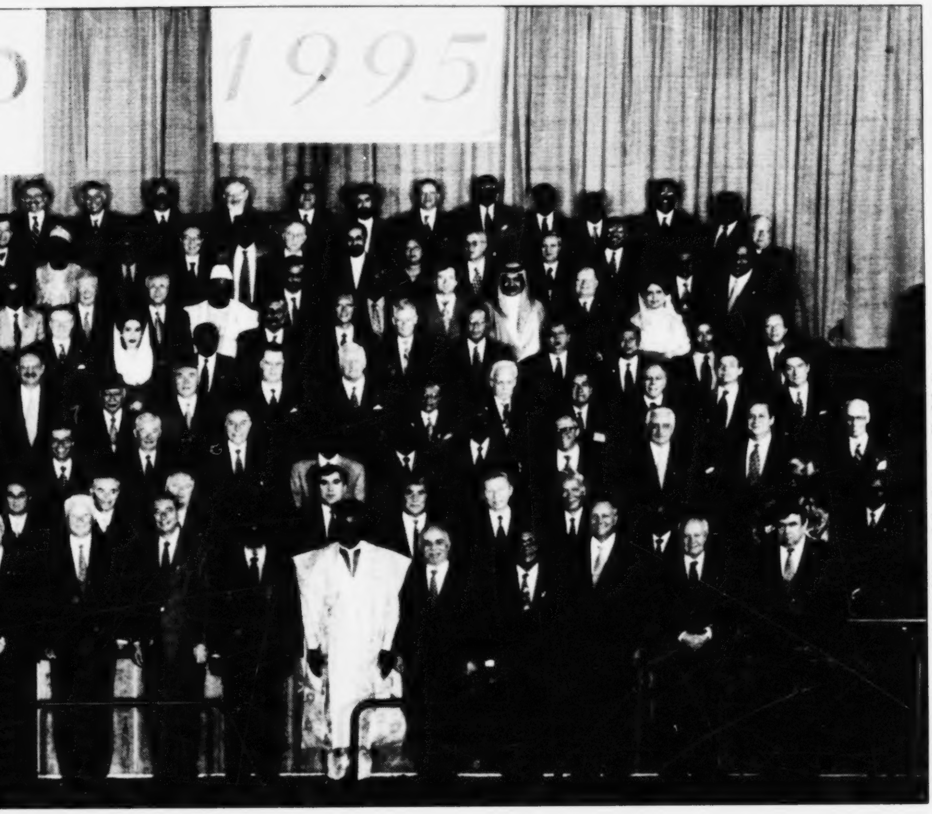
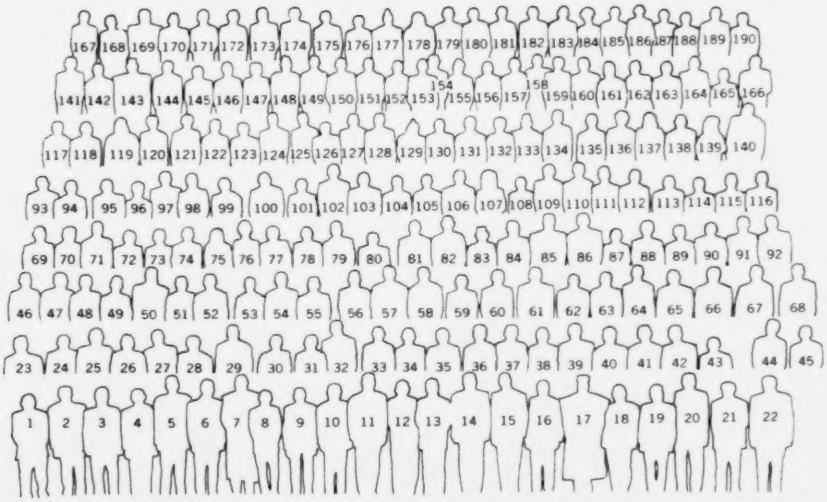
Deputy Prime Minister Philip
Solomon Islands

eral Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations



United Nations Photo by Paul Skipworth for Eastman Kodak Company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